

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

HOME LESSONS
ON THE
OLD PATHS

HOME LESSONS

ON

THE OLD PATHS.



"FEED MY LAMBS."

HOME LESSONS

ON

THE OLD PATHS

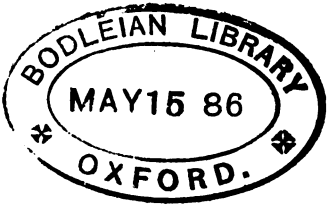
OR

Conversations on the Shorter Catechism.

By M. T. S.

PAISLEY:
J. AND R. PARLANE.
1878.

1367. f 3.


BODLEIAN LIBRARY
MAY15 86
OXFORD.

CONTENTS.

	Page.
INTRODUCTORY—THE STORY OF THE SHORTER CATECHISM	1
I. MAN'S CHIEF END	9
II. THE ONLY RULE	14
III. TRUTH AND DUTY	20
IV. WHAT IS GOD?	25
V. THE THREEFOLD CORD	31
VI. WONDERFUL IN COUNSEL	37
VII. THE WORD OF POWER	42
VIII. THE IMAGE OF GOD	47
IX. OUR FATHER'S CARE	52
X. THE BROKEN COVENANT	57
XI. THE FIRST SIN	63
XII. MAN'S SINFULNESS	68
XIII. MAN'S MISERY	73
XIV. THE COVENANT OF GRACE	77
XV. THE ONLY REDEEMER	85
XVI. CHRIST OUR PROPHET	91
XVII. CHRIST OUR PRIEST	96
XVIII. CHRIST OUR KING	103
XIX. CHRIST'S HUMILIATION AND EXALTATION	108
XX. REDEMPTION APPLIED	113
XXI. EFFECTUAL CALLING	117
XXII. JUSTIFICATION	124
XXIII. ADOPTION	129

		Page
XXIV.	SANCTIFICATION	134
XXV.	PEACE AND JOY	139
XXVI.	ASLEEP IN JESUS	144
XXVII.	THAT DAY	149
XXVIII.	DUTY	156
XXIX.	NOT YOUR OWN	161
XXX.	NO OTHER GODS	166
XXXI.	NO GRAVEN IMAGES	172
XXXII.	HALLOWED BE THY NAME	178
XXXIII.	THE LORD'S DAY	183
XXXIV.	THE LORD'S DAY	190
XXXV.	COMMANDMENT WITH PROMISE	196
XXXVI.	THOU SHALT NOT KILL	201
XXXVII.	THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY	206
XXXVIII.	THOU SHALT NOT STEAL	211
XXXIX.	TRUTH	216
XL.	CONTENTMENT	223
XLI.	NONE PERFECT	228
XLII.	NO DIFFERENCE	232
XLIII.	FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST	237
XLIV.	REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE	242
XLV.	THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT	246
XLVI.	HEAR, LEARN, KEEP, AND DO	253
XLVII.	CONFESSING CHRIST	257
XLVIII.	BAPTISM	262
XLIX.	THE LORD'S SUPPER	266
L.	PRAYER	271
LI.	FORMS OF PRAYER	277
LII.	THE MODEL PRAYER	282

HOME LESSONS ON THE OLD PATHS.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE STORY OF THE SHORTER CATECHISM.

'STAND YE IN THE WAYS, AND SEE, AND ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS, WHERE IS THE GOOD WAY, AND WALK THEREIN, AND YE SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.'

'I WONDER why papa makes us learn the Shorter Catechism? it is so difficult, mamma,' said Charlie, as he sat listlessly turning over the leaves of his book.

'Do you not like to learn it, Charlie? I am sure you know that papa never asks you to learn anything but what he knows is for your real good.'

'I like some of my lessons, mamma, but the question we have to learn to-day is a very difficult one. Nellie and I have been trying to learn it for a long time, and we can't say it yet.'

'Perhaps you do not understand it, and that may be the reason why you find it so very difficult to commit to memory. I wonder if I could help you?'

'O yes, mamma, I am sure you could,' said Nellie, 'for when you tell us the meaning of our lesson we can learn it far more easily.'

With mamma's explanation and help the hard task was soon learned, and when the children had repeated it correctly, mamma told them that she would try to explain to them why papa was so anxious that they should be well acquainted with the Shorter Catechism.

'Do you know, Charlie,' she said, 'who wrote the Catechism, or when and why it was written?'

'No, mamma, I don't know anything about it, excepting that it is very difficult to learn.'

'I think if you knew the story of the Catechism you would feel more interest in it, and learn it with more pleasure and profit.'

'Please tell us all about it, mamma; I like a story so much,' said Nellie.

Little Harry, who was seated on mamma's knee, looked up and said, 'Me like a *'tory* too, mamma;' and little Alice took her place close beside mamma's chair, that she too might hear the story mamma was going to tell. When all the children were quietly seated around her, mamma began.

'The story of the Shorter Catechism,' she said, 'carries our thoughts away back to the history of our land more than two hundred years ago. That was a very sad time. Charles I. then reigned. He thought that because he was king he might command his subjects to do whatever he pleased. Though he had promised to rule justly, he never kept his promises, but broke them so often that no one could believe his word. He commanded the godly ministers throughout England and Scotland to do many things which they felt they could not do without disobeying God; and when they told the king that they must obey God rather than man, he put them out of their churches, and used some of them very cruelly.

'At length the nation would not submit to the king's

tyranny any longer, and chose a Parliament to protect them from it. Civil war began; some fought for the king, others fought for the Parliament, and everything was in confusion.



Westminster Abbey.

The truly good men in the country knew that peace and order could only be established throughout the land, by all the people, rich and poor, rulers and subjects, learning to obey

God; and they earnestly desired that the gospel might be faithfully preached everywhere. They wished to secure liberty to every one to worship God according to His own Word, without being afraid of the king: and many of them were willing to give their lives to this noble cause.

'Accordingly, more than a hundred of the most godly pastors in England were called to meet together in a chapel at Westminster, to consider and consult one another on the best means to be used for planting a pure Church of Christ in every corner of England, Scotland, and Ireland. Four very pious Scotch ministers—Alex. Henderson, Robert Baillie, Samuel Rutherford, and George Gillespie—joined these good men at Westminster, to aid them in their great work. Day after day, week after week, for more than five years, these learned and good men met together to do all that they could for the spread of Christ's kingdom throughout the nation.

'One very important part of their work was to prepare a Confession of Faith for the members of the church, and while doing so they did not forget the young. For their benefit they prepared two Catechisms, the Larger and the Shorter. The Shorter Catechism was written by these eminent men to help parents to teach their children the truths contained in the Holy Scriptures. It is really the confession of faith for the young, and is arranged in questions and answers to make it more easily understood and remembered.'

'But, mamma, what is a Confession of Faith?' asked Nellie.

'A Confession of Faith is a statement of the truths which we believe are taught in the Bible, especially what we believe concerning the Lord Jesus. Paul says, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth *confession* is made unto salvation." And the Lord Jesus says, "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess

also before My Father which is in heaven." In the Bible there are many instances of the Lord's people confessing their faith in Him; and I think were you to find some of their confessions of faith, you would understand better what it means. You might read John i. 49, and you will there see Nathaniel's confession of faith.'

Charlie read the verse, and asked if the words, *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel*, were Nathaniel's confession of faith?

'Yes; that was a noble confession of faith in the Lord Jesus, and you will find another in Matt. xvi. 16.'

Nellie read: 'And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.'

'That was Peter's confession when Jesus said, "Whom say ye that I am?" Martha too confessed her faith in very similar words. Read John xi. 27.'

'"She saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world."'

'At the time when Nathaniel, and Peter, and Martha confessed their faith in Jesus, most of the Jews around them refused to acknowledge Him as the promised Messiah, though they all said they believed the Scriptures. So it is now. Many persons who say they believe the Bible, deny the precious truths contained in it, by which alone we can be saved.'

'This is why papa wishes you all to learn the Shorter Catechism. It is because it points out the saving truths contained in the Scriptures, and helps you to find them in the Bible itself.'

'And, mamma, when we learn the Catechism, should we think that it is our confession of faith?'

'That would be a very good way of learning it; and if you take pains always to find in the Scriptures the truth you learn in the Catechism, and ask God to write it in your heart, you will grow in wisdom, and be ready always to give an answer to everyone that asketh a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.'

'What is the Larger Catechism, mamma?'

'It is very like the Shorter Catechism, only much longer. The subjects and arrangement of the questions are the same in both; but in the Larger Catechism there are more questions, and the answers are much fuller. After you have learned the Shorter Catechism, to read the Larger Catechism carefully would be very useful to you. Both were agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster in 1647-1648, as common Catechisms for the three Kingdoms. They were examined and approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland 1648, and Ratified by Act of Parliament 1649.'



"Let your light so shine."

I.

MAN'S CHIEF END.

'LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE BEFORE MEN, THAT THEY MAY SEE YOUR GOOD WORKS, AND GLORIFY YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN.'

1. *What is the chief end of man?*
Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever.

THESE are the words which Charlie and Nellie were repeating when their good mother came into the room with little Alice and Harry to give them their Sabbath lesson. 'Do you know the meaning of these words, Charlie?' she said.

'I think I do, mamma, for I have been reading the explanation of them in the new book papa gave us this morning.' (Charlie's new book was a copy of that excellent edition of the Shorter Catechism explained, by the Rev. J. Inglis.)

'You might tell me in your own words, Charlie, what you think is the meaning of the answer, *Man's chief end, &c.*'

'I think it means that God made us to be His loving children, and that it should be our chief delight to honour and obey Him.'

'Yes; our Father in heaven is so good in Himself, and has so loved us, that surely it should be our chief end to serve and honour Him, and to rejoice in His love.'

'What is *chief end*, mamma?' said Nellie.

'Our *chief end* is our heart's desire, the one thing we wish more than anything else. You remember the history of

Naaman the Syrian. After he was healed Elisha would not receive any money from him, because Elisha's *chief end* was to give all the glory to God, and to teach Naaman to worship and glorify Him alone. But there was one there whose *chief end* was to get money. He loved money more than the glory of God, and you know how differently he acted.'

'That was Gehazi, mamma. He ran after Naaman and told lies to get money from him, and when he came back he told Elisha he had been nowhere. That was another lie. And God sent Naaman's leprosy on Gehazi to punish him.'

'Yes. Gehazi's sad history shows us that if we make anything else than God's glory our chief end, we will wander far away from the right path. God made us to glorify and enjoy Him, and our chief aim should be to serve the end for which we were created. In the wonderful prayer Jesus gave us for our pattern, He teaches us to seek God's glory as our chief end. Can you tell me how?'

Charlie replied, 'The first petition is, Hallowed be Thy name; and that means, let God be glorified.'

'And what words of Jesus show us that, even when He was a little boy, the glory of God was His chief end?'

'When His mother found Him in the temple, He said, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?"'

'Yes; Jesus is the only one who all His life long did everything to God's glory. He alone could say, "I do always those things that please the Father."'

'Do you know who are the persons whose chief end is to glorify and enjoy God?'

'Good people, mamma; those who love Jesus.'

'Quite right; only those who love Jesus seek to glorify God. All the good men of old made the glory of God their chief end. Enoch and Noah walked with God; Abraham

was the friend of God; Joseph acknowledged God in everything that befell him; Moses prayed, "Lord, show me Thy glory;" Caleb and Joshua followed the Lord fully; David desired one thing, "To behold the beauty of the Lord;" and Paul's earnest hope was, "That Christ might be magnified in his body, whether by life or by death." The chief desire of every one of these good men is expressed in the chorus of Psalm cvii.—"Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!"'

'Little Alice and Harry were too young to learn the Shorter Catechism, but their pious mother wished to teach them the truths contained in it in words which they could understand. So she said, 'Can my little Harry tell me who is the One that he should love best?'

'The great God, our Father in heaven, and good Jesus,' the child replied.

'And, Alice, what should we wish more than anything else?'

'We should always wish to please God, mamma.'

'Yes, that is to glorify God; and if we make this our chief end, God will be our Father and our Friend for ever. If we really wish to please God—to glorify and enjoy Him for ever—what is the first thing we must do?'

'We must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.'

'Never forget this. Without faith in the Lord Jesus, it is impossible to please God. It is by coming to Jesus and abiding in Him—that is keeping near to Him—that we glorify and enjoy God. Read John xv. 4, 8,' and Charlie read.

'"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples."'

'How do Christ's disciples glorify and enjoy Him *for ever?*'

'They go to heaven when they die.'

'They go to be with Christ, which is far better. In His presence is fulness of joy; at His right hand there are pleasures for evermore. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more. . . . For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.'

'Let me hear you repeat part of that beautiful hymn you learned about our Father in heaven, Alice.'

'Art Thou my Father? I'll depend
Upon the care of such a friend,
And only wish to do and be
Whatever seemeth good to Thee.

Art Thou my Father? Then at last
When all my days on earth are past,
Send down and take me in Thy love
To be Thy better child above.'

'I will tell you,' mamma said, 'how a little German boy glorified God. He had been taught to pray, *Hallowed be Thy name*, and he wished to teach his infant brother to praise the great and glorious name of God our Saviour. Both of the boys had been seized with measles, and while lying in their beds, their mother overheard the elder one trying to teach his brother to say Hallelujah. But little Hans was only learning to speak, and Hallelujah was too difficult a word for him to pronounce. Though he tried again and again he could not say it.

'In a few days Hans died, and then his young teacher comforted his weeping mother by saying, "Mother, little Hans will be able to say Hallelujah *now*."

'Our best praises, while on earth, are only like the feeble lispings of little Hans. May we, like these loving brothers, be

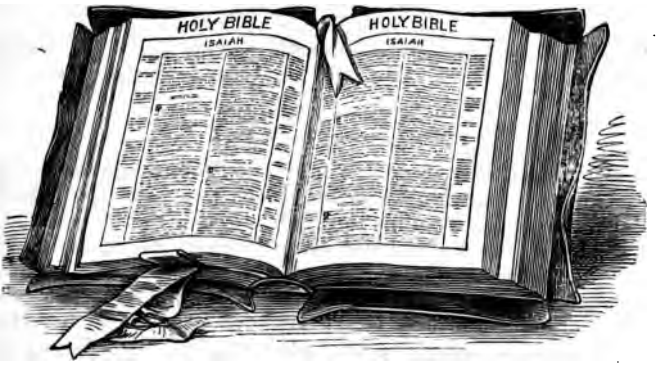
'"Learning here by faith and love
Songs of praise to sing above."'

The children then read the story of Nebuchadnezzar, the great king of Babylon; how his reason was taken from him, and he was driven from his throne to dwell with the beasts of the field, because he had not given glory to God; and how very different a man he was after his reason was restored to him. That proud monarch had become humble as a little child, and now glorified God; acknowledging that all His words are truth, and His ways judgment, and that those who walk in pride He is able to abase.

They read too of that awful day when Belshazzar, while feasting in his palace, saw the hand-writing on the wall, and trembled; of his sending in haste for Daniel, who told him that his kingdom would be taken from him, because the God in whose hand his breath was he had not glorified; and how on that very night Belshazzar was slain, and his kingdom taken by the Medes and Persians.

Then mamma reminded them of the ten lepers whom Jesus healed; how only one, who was a Samaritan, returned to give glory to God; and how grieved Jesus was when He said, 'Where are the nine?' She showed the children that we had all received greater blessings from Jesus than these lepers had done, and that we ought like the Samaritan to return to glorify Him, and not be like the nine who forgot all His benefits.

'O thou my soul, bless God the Lord;
And all that in me is
Be stirred up His holy name
To magnify and bless.'



II.

THE ONLY RULE.

'THY WORD IS A LAMP UNTO MY FEET, AND A LIGHT UNTO MY PATH.'
'IF THEY SPEAK NOT ACCORDING TO THIS WORD, IT IS BECAUSE THERE IS NO LIGHT IN THEM.'

2. *What rule hath God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him?*

The Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him.

'LITTLE travellers Zionward' was a favourite hymn with the children. They often sang it together, and even little Alice and Harry understood its meaning. Mamma had told them that every one is travelling either towards Zion, or towards the dark mountains; and that the Great King has

given the travellers a book to show them the way to the golden gates, and that only those who make this book their rule shall ever reach the golden city.

Every one who is wise values this book as his greatest treasure, and would part with anything rather than with it. It is his delight to meditate on it day and night. To him it is more precious than gold, yea than much fine gold; sweeter than honey, and the honey comb. When he does not know which way to go, this book shows him the path of life; when he is sorrowful its blessed words comfort him, and fill him with joy; and when he is attacked by the enemy, this book is the sword which makes the foe flee away. Every thing the traveller needs for his journey is found in this book.

But the strangest thing of all is, that though this volume is the *only rule* to guide any one to the city of gold, many who think they are going there, pay very little attention to it. So they wander farther and farther from the narrow way, till it is too late, and their feet stumble on the dark mountains.

Sometimes one who has gone far astray finds out his danger; then, with a sorrowful heart, he turns to his book, seeks for the old paths, and the good way, and finds rest to his soul.

'Do you know, Alice, what is the name of the wonderful book which is *the only rule* to show travellers the way to Zion?'

'It is the Bible, mamma.'

'The question which Charlie and I learned this morning is, *What rule hath God given, whereby we may glorify and enjoy Him?*'

'Let me hear you repeat the answer, Nellie.'

'*The Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him.*'

'A rule means a straight line. You know the use of having your copy ruled, Charlie?'

'It is to guide us in writing; if our copies were not ruled, the writing would be all crooked.'

'I am afraid it would. God's commands are the straight lines by which our lives should be ruled, and if we neglect these lines our conduct will be all crooked, far away from the straight path; we will not glorify and enjoy God.'

'Three names, besides the only rule, are given to the Bible in this answer. The Word of God, the first name, tells us that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God.'

'What does *given by inspiration* mean, mamma?' asked Nellie.

'It means that when holy men of old wrote the Bible, God put all the thoughts into their minds, and guided them to choose the very best words, so that they could not make any mistake. No other book was ever written in this wonderful manner. You will find what David tells us of inspiration in 1 Chron. xxviii. 19. Read the verse.'

'"All this, said David, the Lord made me understand in writing by His hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern."'

'Does the name, "The Word of God," suggest any other thought to you? Does it lead you to think of any person?'

'The Word of God is one of the names of Jesus,' said Nellie.

'Yes, Jesus is Himself The Word of God; and when we read the Bible it is Jesus Himself who is speaking to us, walking with us, and showing us the Father. The Bible is the mirror or looking-glass in which we see Jesus, and it is such a wonderful mirror, that when we look at Jesus in it, we become like Him.

'Of what do the names Old and New Testaments remind us, Charlie?'

'Jesus said, "This is the New Testament in My blood."'

'Yes, the name New Testament or New Covenant, points us to the blood of Jesus shed for us; and the name Old Testament points to the same everlasting covenant, when dimly shadowed by the blood of bulls and of goats, which could never take away sin. The very names given to the Bible point out that it is *the only rule to direct us*, because it reveals the only Saviour.'

'You have not told us about the other name, *the Scriptures*, mamma,' said Nelly.

'The Word of God is called the Scriptures or Writings, because no other writings are to be compared with them. For the same reason we call God's Word the Bible or the Book, because it is the best book. The variety of persons who wrote the Scriptures and the different periods at which they wrote, are well worthy of attention. Name some of the writers.'

'Moses and Joshua, David and Solomon, Isaiah and Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel,' said Charlie.

'Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and Paul,' added Nellie.

The Bible is a collection of books written by about forty different authors at widely different periods. The book of Job is supposed to have been written in the time of the patriarchs, and we know that Moses wrote the books of the law more than fifteen hundred years before the Apostle John added the last of the sixty-six books which complete the Holy Scriptures.

Moses was brought up as the son of Pharaoh's daughter; David and Solomon were kings; Ezra was a priest; Amos a herdsman; Matthew a taxgatherer; Luke a physician; Peter

and John were fishermen; and Paul was a learned Pharisee. Each of the writers wrote in his own style in accordance with his own feelings and circumstances, and yet there is a oneness in their writings which shews that they were all moved by the same Holy Spirit, that their writings are the Word of God. The Bible, like the Lord Jesus, is both Divine and human.

'Do you remember how Jesus, when He was tempted, conquered Satan?'

'Jesus always answered Satan from the Bible. He said three times, "It is written,"' Charlie replied.

'That is how we should use our rule; and that we may have it always in readiness when we are tempted, we should treasure its precious words in our memories. We should hide them in our hearts to keep us from sin. David said, "By the word of Thy lips I have kept me from the path of the destroyer." You know who the destroyer is, Nellie?'

'It is Satan, mamma; he goes about like a roaring lion.'

'Yes, Satan is always seeking whom he may devour; and it is only by constantly walking by our rule that we can overcome him. Here are two verses I would like you all to learn—

Lord, though now Thou art in glory
We have Thine example still;
I can read Thy sacred story,
And obey Thy holy will.
Help me by that rule to measure
Every word, and every thought;
Thinking it my greatest pleasure
There to learn what Thou hast taught.'

Then mamma read with the children how Jesus explained the Scriptures to the two disciples as He walked with them to Emmaus, and how they afterwards exclaimed, 'Did not our

heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?'

And she told them a story of an old negro in the West Indies who was very anxious to learn to read the Bible. Though he lived a long way from the missionary's house, he came as often as he could to get a lesson. But his progress was so very slow that the missionary got discouraged, and told him one day that he thought he had better give it up. 'No, massa,' said he with great earnestness, 'me nebber gib it up till me die.' Then pointing with his finger to the beautiful words, which he could only spell out, 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life' (John iii. 16), he said, with tears in his eyes, 'It's worf all de trouble, massa, to read *dat one* verse!'

'Upon Thy statutes my delight
Shall constantly be set:
And, by Thy grace, I never will
Thy holy word forget.'

III.

TRUTH AND DUTY.

'SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES; FOR IN THEM YE THINK YE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE; AND THEY ARE THEY WHICH TESTIFY OF ME.'

3. *What do the Scriptures principally teach?*

The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.

'THAT is the question we are to repeat to-night, mamma.'

'Yes, Charlie, and a very important one it is. Many persons who have been long acquainted with the Scriptures, have never learned the one thing which they principally teach.'

'What is *principally teach*, mamma?' asked Nellie.

'You know that the Bible teaches us a great many things. It contains history and biography, poetry and prophecy, proverbs and precepts, miracles and parables, and much instruction on a great variety of subjects. But there is one thing which the Bible tells us that is of far more importance to a sinner than all the rest. What is that, Nellie?'

'It is that Jesus died for our sins.'

'Yes; the knowledge of the way of salvation by Christ Jesus is what the Scriptures *principally* teach. Alice knows what is the best story in all the Bible.'

'The old, old story, of Jesus and His love; that is the best story,' Alice replied.

'And little Harry knows what the Bible tells us.'

And mamma's little pet gave his answer in the words of a hymn he had just learned:

'Jesus loves me, this I know,
For the Bible tells me so.'

'That is the good news which the Bible brings to us from heaven, the good tidings of great joy to all people.'

'But, mamma,' said Charlie, 'the answer in the Catechism does not name Jesus at all. It is, *The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.*'

'That answer tells us two things contained in Scripture which the Catechism teaches, viz., TRUTH and DUTY. Every question on to the thirty-ninth, points out some truth which we are to believe, and all the questions after that point out the duties we are to practise. As we get farther on you will see that every Scripture truth points to Jesus, and that He is the example of every duty God requires of man.'

'I think I understand it better now. What we are to believe concerning God is, that He sent Jesus to be our Saviour; and the duty God requires of man is, to follow Jesus, and grow like Him.'

'Yes, Charlie, Jesus is Himself THE TRUTH in whom we are to believe, and the example we are to imitate. He is the centre of all Scripture TRUTH and DUTY. Do you remember that papa once showed you the solar system with a magic lantern?'

'O yes, mamma, it was most beautiful. The sun was in the middle, and all the planets moved round it.'

'And papa told us,' added Nellie, 'that all the planets get their light from the sun, and it is the sun's attraction which keeps every one of them in its right place.'

'And you know who is the Sun of Righteousness?'

'It is Jesus, He is the Sun of Righteousness.'

'Jesus is the Sun, the centre of the Christian system. Every Scripture truth, and every duty, revolves around Him, gets its light and beauty from Him, and is kept in its proper place by Him.'

'Do you know, Charlie, why truth is placed first in the Catechism, and duty afterwards?'

'No, mamma; I thought that to do what is right, is the most important thing.'

'And so it is; but we will never do what is right, unless we believe what is true. Truth is the root, duty is the fruit. It is truth entering into the heart which makes the tree good, and duty is the fruit it yields. Falsehood in the heart makes the tree evil, and sin is the fruit it yields. (Matt. xii. 33-35.) What was it, Nellie, that made Eve disobey God?'

'Satan told Eve a lie, and she believed Satan rather than God.'

'Yes, it was Satan's lie entering into her soul which made the good tree corrupt, and brought sin into the world. Falsehood is the root of sin. I will show you something which will help you to understand this better,' and mamma unfolded a missionary map of the world to the wondering gaze of the children.

'What a strange map that is!' they exclaimed. 'Why is there so much of it black?'

'The black parts are heathen countries; the dark places of the earth, which are full of the habitations of cruelty. It would make you shudder to think of the horrible cruelties which are done in these dark places. Mothers strangle their own babes, and children leave their aged parents to starve in the woods, or be devoured by the wild beasts. They are

always fighting with one another, and any one who tries to make peace between them, is in danger of being murdered. Do you know why they do all these wicked things, Charlie?'

'It is because they do not know the gospel, and think that these horrid deeds will please their gods.'

'Yes, Charlie, it is because Satan has bound them fast in the chains of falsehood. These poor heathen

> "Call us to deliver
> Their land from error's chain."'

'I thought that a great many missionaries had gone to tell the heathen about Jesus, mamma. Where are the places to which they have gone?'

'Look on the map, and you will see little white spots here and there. These are the missionary stations—the little centres of light amid the darkness. But these would need to be multiplied a thousand fold, for not one tenth of the world's inhabitants have yet had the Word of God sent to them. It has been computed that in China alone *a million die every month without ever having heard of a Saviour's love.* Do you not think we should all try to do more to send the Truth to these benighted lands?'

'Is that what the hymn means when it says,

> "Shall we, whose souls are lighted
> With wisdom from on high,—
> Shall we to men benighted
> The lamp of life deny?"'

'Yes, Nellie, that is what it means. That beautiful hymn was written by Bishop Heber, a good missionary in India, whose spirit, like Paul's, was stirred in him when he saw the people wholly given to idolatry.'

'I never thought there were so many heathen in the world before, mamma,' said Charlie.

'I hope you will all remember the heathen more than you have ever done; and especially, that you will value the truth more yourselves, and never forget the one thing which *the Scriptures principally teach.* And now we shall read about Paul preaching at Athens, and you will see how he showed the heathen in that city the truth concerning God, and their duty to Him.'

When they had finished reading, mamma told them of a poor Hindoo who was lying dying by the roadside. A missionary found him there, and asked him where he hoped to go after death. To his surprise and joy the dying man told the missionary that he was going to be with Jesus. He held in his hand a torn scrap of a leaf from a New Testament, on which were the words, 'The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.' This was the only portion of Scripture the Hindoo had ever possessed, but it contained the one central truth which is able to make wise unto salvation. From this one text, that poor Hindoo had learned the truth which *the Scriptures principally teach,* and he died rejoicing.

IV.

WHAT IS GOD?

'NO MAN HATH SEEN GOD AT ANY TIME; THE ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, WHICH IS IN THE BOSOM OF THE FATHER, HE HATH DECLARED HIM.'

4. *What is God?*

God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.

'THE answer we have got to learn to-day in the Catechism is a very difficult one. Please, mamma, will you help us?' said Nellie, as the children seated themselves around their mother.

'I shall tell you a story about the question, What is God? and how the answer which you are learning was prepared. Then I think you will be able to commit it to memory.

'It is related of Simonides, a Greek Poet who lived 2500 years ago, that when residing in his old age at Syracuse, he was asked by Hiero the king, What is God? Unable to reply at once, he asked for a day to consider. Next day the question was again put. Simonides, still unable to reply, asked two days to consider; then again four days; and yet again eight days. Surprised at the delay, the king asked the Greek poet the reason, and received this answer, "The more I think of God, He is still the more dark and unknown to me."

'The Bible alone can answer the question, What is God? and shew us that in Christ Jesus He is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all.

'It is told that when the Westminster Divines, in preparing the Catechism, came to the question, *What is God?* these good men were so impressed with the greatness of the subject, and with their own inability to frame a suitable answer to so very solemn a question, that for a time no one spoke a word. After long consideration, George Gillespie, the youngest of the Scotch Commissioners, was asked to pray for light from above. His prayer began thus: "O God! Thou Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in Thy being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth." Some of those present wrote his words, and the Assembly received them both as an answer to their prayer, and to the solemn question, *What is God?* No one suggested a single alteration. All felt that this one sentence contained so much truth in words so well chosen, that a better answer could not be prepared. Never has it been equalled in simplicity, fulness, and truth.'

'Why was it so much more difficult to answer this question, than the others in the Catechism, mamma?' asked Charlie.

'It was more difficult because this answer is the foundation on which all the others are built. The first three questions are only the entrance to the building. Knowing that a right belief concerning God is the foundation of all true piety, these good men were most anxious to teach the young the knowledge of God in the very best words that could be chosen, and they felt that the subject was too wonderful for them. You will understand this better if you think for a little of how many answers might be given from the Bible to the question, *What is God?* Alice knows a little text which tells us what God is?'

'"God is Love," and I know another one, mamma, "God is Light,"' Alice replied.

'God is our Father in heaven,' said Nellie; and Charlie added, '"God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."'

'These are all correct answers, and I am sure you could find many more. The Catechism answer, though so short, is gathered from a great many passages of Scripture. Little Harry will tell us now what he has learned about God?'

'Jesus is God, mamma; and Jesus loves little children,' said Harry.

'That is the best answer; Jesus is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person. When Philip said to Jesus, Lord, shew us the Father; Jesus said, He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father. The same kind Jesus who took the little children in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them, is the infinite, eternal, and unchangeable God.'

'Jesus said that He was not a spirit, mamma. He said, a spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see me have,' Nellie remarked enquiringly.

'You know that a spirit cannot be seen. No man hath seen God at any time. It was His human body that Jesus shewed to His disciples, and after they had seen Him ascend to heaven, they returned to Jerusalem with great joy. When Jesus told them shortly before His death that He was going away, sorrow filled their hearts, and yet after they had seen Him go up to heaven in the clouds they were filled with joy; why were they so glad?'

'I don't know. I thought they would have been very sorry that Jesus had gone away and left them.'

'Jesus' parting words, "Lo, I am with you alway," tell us the secret of their great joy. They knew that though they would not see Jesus any more on earth, He was still with

them, that He would never leave nor forsake them, and that He would supply all their need out of His infinite stores of *wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.* They rejoiced because they knew that the same Jesus who had been their friend and teacher, is the unchangeable God. I think, Charlie, that you could tell us now what is the meaning of the words, *infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in His being?*'

'They mean that God is everywhere, that He never had a beginning and will never have an end, and that He is always the same.'

'Quite right, Charlie; and then the Catechism tells us that God is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in His wisdom, in His power, in His holiness, &c. We must think of what that means now. Who was it that asked God for wisdom, and received a very large share of it from Him?'

'It was Solomon,' said Nellie. 'He was the wisest man in the world; the queen of Sheba came a long journey to hear his wisdom?'

'And yet Jesus said, "A greater than Solomon is here." Solomon's wisdom was only *finite,* that is, measured; there were a great many things that Solomon did not know; but the wisdom of Jesus is *infinite;* it cannot be measured, because He knows everything. Solomon was a very powerful king, but there were a great many things that he could not do. He could not heal the sick, raise the dead, or command the winds and the sea, because his power was only *finite.* Jesus can do everything, because His power is *infinite.* Solomon built a magnificent temple; Jesus created the heavens and the earth.

'Can you tell me what good man was so distinguished for his holiness, justice, goodness, and truth, that his enemies

could find nothing against him, except concerning the law of his God?'

'That was Daniel, mamma; he was the man greatly beloved.'

'Daniel was a very beautiful character, and yet you know how he confessed his sins to God, and besought his forgiveness. Jesus alone is *infinite* or perfect in holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. He alone did not sin.

'The best way to learn the wonderful wisdom, power, and holiness of God, is to consider them in His works. Do you know in which of God's works His wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth, are all most gloriously displayed?'

'It is in the work of saving sinners.'

'Yes. It is the cross of Jesus which shews us most clearly the wonderful character of God. There, mercy and truth meet together; there, we see a just God and a Saviour. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.'

Then the children read the story of the cross, of

'That wonderful redemption,
God's remedy for sin;'

nd mamma told them that God's wisdom had planned the reat salvation before the world was made, and that His ernal truth will carry it on till all the redeemed, that great ultitude, which no man could number, stand around the rone, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.

And they spoke of a little Persian girl who had learned the ry of the cross in Miss Fiske's Mission School, and had en her heart to Jesus. One day she came to her teacher,

and asked her if it was wrong to wish to die. 'Why should you wish to die,' asked Miss Fiske, and the child replied, '*That I may go and stay with Jesus, and never sin again.*' Another time she said, '*It seems to me I cannot wait, I do so want to go to my Saviour.*'

Soon her longing soul was satisfied. A few months after she was seized with cholera, and joyfully departed to be with Christ, which is far better. '*Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.*'

V.

THE THREEFOLD CORD.

'THE GRACE OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THE LOVE OF GOD, AND THE COMMUNION OF THE HOLY GHOST, BE WITH YOU ALL.'

5. *Are there more Gods than one?*
There is but one only, the living and true God.

6. *How many persons are there in the Godhead?*
There are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

'CHARLIE and I have learned two answers in the Catechism to-day, mamma; the fifth one is so very short and easy, that we learned the sixth one too.'

'That was right; you will understand these two best by taking them together.'

'The first one is as plain as it can be. It is, *There is but One only, the living and true God.*'

'That is a truth which seems very plain to you, because you have been brought up in a Christian land, and taught it from your infancy; and yet, it is a truth which the most learned men in the world could not discover without the Bible. Even the wisest philosophers, historians, and orators of ancient Greece and Rome, had no idea of the One Living and True God. The Greeks believed in so many gods, that lest there might be some one of the numerous deities which they had neglected to worship, they made a temple to the unknown

god. At the present time the Hindoos, Chinese, and Burmese worship thousands of gods. Excepting in some small spots where the gospel is known, these nations have no idea of One Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable. How thankful should we be, that

"We were not born, as thousands are,
Where God was never known;
And taught to pray a useless prayer
To blocks of wood and stone."

Can you tell me, Charlie, how Elijah showed the worshippers of Baal that there is only one living and true God?'

'That was at mount Carmel. Elijah made them prepare a sacrifice, and pray to their god to send fire to consume it; but, though they cried to Baal the whole day, no fire came. Then Elijah laid his sacrifice on the altar of the Lord, and whenever he prayed, fire came down and consumed it. "And the people said, The Lord, He is the God; the Lord, He is the God."'

'And what was the duty Elijah taught the people from this truth? You will find it in 1 Kings xviii. 21.'

'And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow Him, &c.'

'Let me hear you answer the next question. *How many persons are there in the Godhead?*'

'*There are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.*'

'How can there be three persons and only one God, mamma? I do not understand it at all.'

'That is a truth which no one in this world can understand. It is one of the mysteries, or secret wonders, which God

has made known to us in His Word. In "The Pilgrim's Progress," John Bunyan tells us that when Christiana and her sons were in the house Beautiful, Prudence asked one of the boys, "What do you do when you meet with places therein (in the Bible) that you do not understand?" and his answer is a very beautiful one. Read it, Charlie.'

'I think God is wiser than I. I pray also that He will please to let me know all therein that He knows will be for my good.'

'A very good man—a friend of the poet Cowper—wrote in a letter, that he often felt thankful that there were mysteries in the Bible. He said there were so many things in the world around that he could not understand, that had he been able to understand everything in the Bible, he could not have believed that it had come from the same God who made the world.'

'What things in the world did he mean, mamma?'

'A great many things. You know that you have a soul, but you do not understand how it is united to your body; you know that you were once a little baby, but you cannot understand how you grew to be so tall as you are now; you know that plants grow from small seeds, but you do not know how. The wisest men in the world cannot explain what life is, nor how the sun's rays communicate life. Nor can any one tell how the blending together of the three primary colours, yellow, red, and blue, makes pure light. When we are so very ignorant of the things around us, surely we should believe whatever God has told us in His Word even where we cannot understand it. God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. Do you know, Charlie, where the Bible tells us that all the three persons in the Godhead were employed in making the world?'

'The first verse of the first chapter of Genesis says, "God created;" the second verse says, "The Spirit of God moved

upon the face of the waters;" and in the twenty-sixth verse we read, "God said, Let *us* make man."'

'And many texts tell us that the Son of God made the world. (John i. 3). In Proverbs viii. 22-30, we read of the joy which the Son of God had with the Father before the earth was created. But it is the work of redemption which shows us most clearly the three persons of the Godhead. Tell me, Harry, who so loved the world that He sent His own Son to be our Redeemer?'

'Our Father in heaven.'

'And who became man for us, obeyed the law which we had disobeyed, and bore the punishment of our sins in His own body on the cross?'

'Jesus the Son of God, our Saviour.'

'And who teaches sinners to understand and believe the Bible, leads them to Jesus, and so makes them children of God, Alice?'

'It is the Holy Spirit.'

'Can you tell me in whose name we are baptized?'

'In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the Three-One-God.'

'The truth that the three Divine persons are One God, is what is called the doctrine of the Trinity; and it is this glorious doctrine which secures the salvation of every one who believes in Jesus. A Christian lady, shortly before her death, when thinking of the wonderful plan of redemption—of the Son giving His life for us, of the Father accepting His sacrifice, and of the Holy Spirit converting sinners—said, A THREEFOLD CORD IS NOT SOON BROKEN. The words, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all," show us this three-fold cord.'

'That is what the minister says before we leave the church, mamma,' said Alice.

'These words are called the benediction, or words of blessing. The priests of old blessed the people in words very like those, using the name, *The Lord*, three times (Numbers vi. 23-27).

'Those who deny the doctrine of the Trinity, take away from the Bible the covenant of grace, and leave sinners without a Saviour. Read 1 John ii. 22, 23.'

'"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father."'

'It is vain for any one who denies that the Son and the Holy Spirit are Divine persons equal with the Father, to say that he believes in the One Living and true God. Read Jesus' own words in John xiv. 11.'

'"Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; or else believe Me for the very works sake."'

'And what did Jesus say of the Holy Spirit? Read John xvi. 7.'

'"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you."'

'When Jesus was baptised in Jordan, the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him, and the Father's voice from heaven said, Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased.'

The children then read the three parables in the 15th of Luke, the first of which shows us Jesus, the Good Shepherd, seeking the lost; the second shows us the Holy Spirit lighting

the candle of the Word, and making it shine into the heart of the sinner; and the third shows us the Father receiving, forgiving, and welcoming the returned wanderer.

'Why is not the parable which shows us the Father placed first, mamma?' asked Charlie.

'Because it is only by Jesus, through the Spirit, that sinners can come to the Father. Jesus is the sinner's surety. He obeyed the law, and died in our stead; the Father is well pleased; the Spirit has come, and thus the everlasting covenant is a threefold cord which can never be broken.'

Glory to the Father give,
God in whom we move and live;
Children's prayers He deigns to hear—
Children's songs delight His ear.

Glory to the Son we bring,
Christ our Prophet, Priest, and King;
Children, raise your sweetest strain
To the Lamb, for He was slain.

Glory to the Holy Ghost;
Be this day a Pentecost;
Children's minds may He inspire—
Touch their tongues with holy fire.

Glory in the highest be
To the blessed Trinity,
For the gospel from above;
For the word, that 'God is love!'

VI.

WONDERFUL IN COUNSEL.

'THERE ARE MANY DEVICES IN A MAN'S HEART; NEVERTHELESS THE COUNSEL OF THE LORD, THAT SHALL STAND.'

7. *What are the decrees of God?*

The decrees of God are His eternal purpose, according to the counsel of His will, whereby, for His own glory, He hath fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass.

8. *How doth God execute His decrees?*

God executeth His decrees in the works of creation and providence.

'MAMMA, when we were reading about Augustus Cæsar's decree, that all the world should be taxed, you told us that a decree is a command, but in this answer decrees seem to mean something quite different from commands.'

'*The decrees of God* are very different from the decrees of kings; but the same word is used because there is some resemblance between them. Why did Augustus Cæsar send forth this decree?'

'It was because he was determined that a tax should be raised.'

'Augustus had purposed in his heart to raise a tax, and his decree was sent forth to accomplish his purpose; but when we speak of God's decrees, we mean the thoughts in His heart, or as the Catechism says, *His eternal purpose.* Do you remember a decree made by Cyrus?'

'That was about building the temple, mamma.'

'Read that decree or proclamation, Charlie. It is in Ezra vi. 3.'

'"In the first year of Cyrus the king, the same Cyrus the king made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, Let the house of God be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid."'

'Cyrus purposed in his heart to rebuild the temple, and this decree made known his purpose; but who put it into the heart of Cyrus to make this proclamation?'

'It was God who stirred up Cyrus.'

'God had decreed long before that the temple should be built. A hundred years before Cyrus was born, Isaiah prophesied that he should build the temple. Read Isaiah xlv. 13.'

'"I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build My city, and he shall let go My captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts."'

'That prophecy declared *God's eternal purpose* that the temple should be built, and the decree of Cyrus fulfilled God's decree.'

'But, mamma, why are God's decrees called His *eternal* purpose?'

'Before the world was created, in the ages of eternity, God *fore-ordained* every event that should take place in the world's history. Every thing was known to Him and determined by Him from the beginning. And by what rule did God arrange all things?'

'The answer says, *according to the counsel of His will.*'

'When we plan any important work, we consult our friends regarding it; but God planned the great work of creating, governing, and redeeming the world, according to His own counsel. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy

Spirit, in the beginning fore-ordained all that should come to pass. In the second psalm we read of a wonderful decree between the Father and the Son. Read verse 7th, Charlie.'

'"I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, &c."'

'That is the decree by which the Son of God was appointed our Redeemer from eternity. The glorious scheme of redemption was decreed or ever the earth was. This is why Jesus is called, The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. The Lord is wonderful in Counsel.'

'But, mamma, does God decree all the wicked things that are done in the world?'

'We know that only good comes from God. Evil comes from Satan and from man himself; yet God permits evil; and while He punishes evil-doers, He overrules their wickedness in such a way as to make it accomplish His own holy purposes. Wicked men crucified Jesus, yet He died for our sins, and so fulfilled God's *eternal purpose*. Read Acts ii. 23.'

'"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."'

'The Jews took counsel to destroy Jesus. But there is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the Lord.'

'Mamma, the answer says God *fore-ordains whatsoever comes to pass*. Does that mean that everything that happens to us all our lives long, is determined by God?'

'No doubt of it. Jesus tells us that not a sparrow falls to the ground without our Father, and that the names of His people were all written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. He saw them all lost in Adam,

determined to save them, and arranged all the events in the world's history for their good. And why did He fore-ordain every event?'

'*For His own glory*, the answer says.'

'The decrees of God wonderfully display His glory. Man's purposes are often defeated, but God's counsel stands sure. It can never be reversed.'

'God doth the counsel bring to nought,
Which heathen folk do take;
And what the people do devise,
Of none effect doth make.
O, but the counsel of the Lord
Doth stand for ever sure;
And of His heart the purposes
From age to age endure.'

'Are God's promises His decrees, mamma, asked Nellie.'

'God has decreed the fulfillment of both His promises and His threatenings; and these are the decrees with which we have to do. When Joshua was an old man about to die, he gave his testimony to the faithfulness of God? You will find it in Joshua xxiii. 14,' and Charlie read.

'"And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof."'

'Joshua knew that God had decreed to give Israel, the land of Canaan, and he acknowledged His faithfulness in fulfilling this decree, and warned them against disobedience, lest by another decree they should be destroyed. What is God's promise concerning prayer?'

'I know a verse about prayer,' said little Alice.

'"Every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."'

'God's *eternal purpose* is to grant blessings in answer to prayer. He fulfils His own decrees by answering the prayers of His people. "Thus saith the Lord God; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them."' (Ezek. xxxvi. 37.)

'A poor widow and her grandson heard that a troop of soldiers were daily expected to pillage the neighbourhood in which they lived. The inhabitants were in great fear, but this old woman trusted in God. At evening prayers, she prayed that God would build a wall around them to keep them from danger. When they rose from their knees, the boy asked his grandmother, "What did you mean by praying to have a wall built around us?" She replied, "I only meant to ask God to protect us from the soldiers in His own way; but if it were needful for us, God could easily build a wall around us."'

'When the boy and his grandmother rose next morning, their cottage was snowed up. A wall of snow surrounded it, so that no one could come near them. A day or two afterwards, when the snow was cleared away, what was their astonishment to learn that the soldiers had been in the neighbourhood, and had pillaged several houses, but the snow wall had kept them away from their cottage. Thus God, by sending the snow, answered the widow's prayer, and fulfilled His own purpose to keep her in safety.

'*God executeth His decrees in the works of creation and providence.*'

'Sweet in the confidence of faith
To trust His firm decrees;
Sweet to lie passive in His hands,
And know no will but His.'

VII.

THE WORD OF POWER.

'IN THE BEGINNING GOD CREATED THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH. AND GOD SAW EVERY THING THAT HE HAD MADE, AND, BEHOLD, IT WAS VERY GOOD.'

9. *What is the work of creation?*

The work of creation is, God's making all things of nothing, by the word of His power, in the space of six days, and all very good.

'CAN you tell me where we find the account of *God's making all things of nothing?*'

'It is in the first chapter of Genesis, at the very beginning of the Bible, and Moses wrote it, mamma.'

'And why is the first book of the Bible called Genesis?'

'Because Genesis means "the beginning,"' Nellie replied.

'The chapter we are going to read, is the only true history of the beginning of the world; all other accounts are only foolish fables, for none but God could tell us how the world was made. Now we will read the chapter, and Harry will listen to the wonderful story.'

When they had finished reading, mamma said to little Harry, 'When a man is going to build a house, he collects stones, and lime, and wood, &c., of which to build it; can you tell me of what God made the world?'

'Of nothing, mamma; God made the world, and the sun, and the moon, and the stars, all of nothing.'

'Yes, how very wonderful. God alone can make anything of nothing. What word in our lesson tells us that God made *all things of nothing*, Nellie?'

'The first verse says, "In the beginning God *created* the heaven and the earth." *Created*, is the word, mamma.'

'God's making all things of nothing, is called the work of creation. This is the first truth the Bible makes known to us. It is the first Bible wonder, and the next is how He made all things. Can you tell me this, Harry?'

'God said, Light be, and it was; and He said, Let the dry land appear, and the waters flowed into the seas, and the dry land appeared.'

'"By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; for He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast." And still God upholds all things *by the word of His power*. This is the second of creation's wonders. Do you know what the word "day," means, in this chapter?'

'A day means twenty-four hours, from one morning till the next morning,' said Charlie.

'A day commonly does mean twenty-four hours, but in Scripture it often signifies a period of time which may be of any length. The six days of creation cannot be days of twenty-four hours, because the sun was not appointed to rule the day, and to divide the light from the darkness, till the fourth day. Time, as we reckon it, did not begin till Adam was created. The six periods of creation are called days, to bring before our minds at one view, the whole of this great work, and to fix in our hearts the truth, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. Now, Charlie, you might name some of the wonders done by that *word of power*, in these six days?'

'Light was created on the first day; air on the second; the

dry land appeared, and plants were created on the third day; the sun and moon became lights to the earth on the fourth day; then living creatures were made, and last of all, God created man.'

'How many wonders you have named, Charlie. We might study any one of them all our lives long, and be ever finding something new regarding it. The great Sir Isaac Newton said, a short time before his death, "I do not know what I may appear to the world; but to myself, I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the sea-shore, and diverting himself in now and then finding a smoother pebble, or a prettier shell than ordinary, while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me." The more we know of God, the more will we feel our own ignorance. In studying the works of creation, there is one truth which we must not forget. It is stated six times in the chapter we have been reading, and is mentioned in the Catechism. What is it, Charlie?'

'*All very good.* "God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good."'

'Every thing was created perfect, and served the end for which God had made it. Nothing could have been made better than it is. All God's works praise Him. The heavens declare His glory, and the earth is full of His goodness. Mountains and all hills; fruitful trees and all cedars; beasts and all cattle; creeping things and flying fowl: all praise the name of the Lord.'

'Jesus taught His disciples to look at the works of creation around them? What did He teach them from the light, and the life, and the air?'

'He taught them that light, and life, are emblems of the gospel; and that the wind or air, is an emblem of the Holy Spirit.'

'A few years ago, Neesima, a young prince in Japan, became convinced that none of the gods he had been taught to worship, could be the Maker, Preserver, and Governor of the world. Though he had never seen a Christian, nor heard of the gospel of Christ, the works of creation had told him dimly of some better object of worship than the idols of his country, and he was feeling after the unknown God, the Maker of heaven and earth. And he did not seek in vain. Soon a companion brought him a portion of the Bible in Chinese; though he only regarded it as a strange story which he wished his friend to read. But Neesima read it in a very different spirit. The first words, *God in the beginning created the heavens and the earth*, seemed to him a revelation from heaven, and he received the book, not as the word of men, but as in truth the word of God. E'er long he found a little book on Geography by an American Missionary, and learning from it that in America the Bible is taught and the true God is worshipped, he became very desirous to visit that far off land. In spite of many difficulties and dangers, Neesima succeeded in reaching America; and there God raised up for him friends, by whom he was educated for the ministry. At Boston, on the 24th of September, 1874, that Japanese prince was ordained to the work of preaching the everlasting gospel.'

'And did he go away back to Japan?'

'Yes; after his ordination he returned to Japan, to tell his own countrymen that the Great God who made heaven and earth, is not far from every one of us, for in Him we live, and move, and have our being; and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Read Heb. xi. 3.'

'"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."'

'The story of this Japanese prince shews us that the works of creation can only whisper to man of an unknown God, till he receives light from the Holy Scriptures. The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.'

'Every thing in nature is designed to teach us spiritual truth, and the Bible teaches us to read the book of nature aright. I remember some lines, on the sea-shore, written by John Newton, which shew us how he read that page of the book of creation:—

In every object here, I see
Something, O Lord, that points to Thee:
Firm as the rock Thy promise stands;
Thy mercies countless as the sands;
Thy love, a sea immensely wide;
Thy grace an ever flowing tide.

In every object here, I see
Something, my heart, that points at thee:
Hard as the rock that bounds the strand;
Unfruitful, like the barren sand;
Deep and deceitful as the ocean;
And, like the tide, in constant motion.

VIII.

THE IMAGE OF GOD.

'So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.'

10. *How did God create man?*

God created man male and female, after His own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures.

'After His own image. What does that mean, mamma?' asked Nellie, when she had read the words, *God created man, male and female, after His own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures.*

'Do you know what we mean, when we say of a child that he is the very *image* of his father?'

'O yes, mamma, that means that he is very like his papa; just as like him as he can be.'

'Adam and Eve were the children of God, and when created, they were very like their Father. God made them *after His own image* or likeness.'

'But, mamma, it is a little boy's face that is like his papa's, and God is a spirit. How could Adam and Eve be like God?'

'If you read the words which follow in the answer, I think you will find that out.'

Nellie read, '*in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness,*' and after thinking for a little, said, 'It must have been Adam's soul that was like God.'

'You know that it is the soul, in the body, that is the dwelling-place of knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. The human body is a very wonderful work of God, but it is only the servant of the soul, which is the nobler part of that which God created *after His own image*.'

'How was Adam like God *in knowledge*, when God knows every thing?' asked Charlie.

'We are quite sure that Adam's knowledge was not infinite, like God's, for the promise of greater knowledge was the temptation by which Satan deceived our first parents. But Adam's knowledge was very great, and it was perfect in kind. All his knowledge was truth. What are the five gateways by which knowledge enters the soul, Charlie?'

'Our five senses,—Eye-gate, Ear-gate, Nose-gate, Mouth-gate, and Touch-gate.'

'Before man sinned, truth alone entered his soul by these gateways. Every sight and every sound in creation spoke to him of the greatness and the goodness of his Almighty Father. His was the "true knowledge which leads to love," not the knowledge which puffeth up. In the passage from which the word *knowledge* is taken, it is placed in opposition to falsehood, which shews us that it means truth. Read Col. iii. 9, 10.'

'Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.'

'These words shew us that to be like God *in knowledge*, is to know the truth, to have the Spirit of truth dwelling in us, and guiding us into all truth by making us to know the love of God which passeth knowledge. (1 John ii. 20, 27.) This is the knowledge which is better than gold; all the things

that may be desired, are not to be compared to it. And what is it to be like God in *righteousness and holiness?* Can you tell me, Charlie?'

'Our teacher told us that it meant that before he sinned, Adam always thought the truth, and spoke the truth, and did the truth.'

'Yes, when God made man, He made him upright. God's commandments were his delight, and God's glory his chief end. In the eighth psalm, Adam's glory before he sinned is described in words which are quoted in Hebrews, to describe the glory and honour with which Jesus is crowned. What is Jesus called, because Adam was a type of Him?'

'The second Adam means Jesus, mamma.'

'Jesus is the second Adam, and the best way to understand what it is to bear the image of God, is to study the life of Jesus. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. God made Adam like Him. Read Jer. ii. 21, Charlie.'

'Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed &c.'

'Jesus is the true vine, and these words shew us that man was made to be like Him. Do you know, Nellie, how sinners may again become like God *in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness?*'

'It is the Holy Spirit who makes sinners like God; He gives them new hearts.'

'The Holy Spirit shews sinners the beauty of the Lord in the glass of His Word, and by looking at Him, they are changed into His image. (2 Cor. iii. 18.) Can you tell me, Charlie, how a photographer takes likenesses?'

'The photographer first prepares the plate, and then places it so that the reflection of the person will fall upon it, and the sun paints and fixes the likeness.'

'And if we wish to become like Jesus, our hearts must be prepared to receive His image, and the Holy Spirit will shine upon His Word, and paint His likeness on our souls. When will the likeness be quite perfect, Nellie?'

'When we get to heaven, mamma; the Bible says, "We shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."'

'The souls of Christ's people will be made perfectly like Jesus whenever they die, but when will their bodies too, bear His image?'

'At the resurrection.'

'Yes; at the resurrection the Lord Jesus will change the bodies of His people, and make them like His own glorious body. To be with Jesus, and to be like Him, is the joy of heaven. Alice, you will let us hear the verses you have learned about the new heart;' and Alice repeated the lines by Charles Wesley—

A heart in every thought renewed
And filled with love Divine,
Perfect, and right, and pure, and good;
A copy Lord of Thine.

Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart;
Come quickly from above;
Write Thy new name upon my heart,
Thy new, best name of Love.

Little Harry was wearying for a story, so mamma told them of a very little girl who got the new heart, and knew that she had got it. She was the daughter of a friend of the Rev. Mr Milne of Perth. On one occasion when that good man was visiting his friend, he was much interested in his little girl, who was then between four and five years of age. Taking her upon his knee, he taught her a little prayer, and asked her to repeat it every morning and evening. It was this, 'O Lord, *give me a* new heart.'

'Next time Mr Milne came to see her parents, he heard that his little friend had been taken to the home above, and he learned from her mother that she had not forgotten her promise to him. Till within a few weeks of her death, she had repeated the words, "O Lord, give me a new heart," every morning and evening at the close of her own little prayer. The first time that she omitted the words, her mother said to her, "You have forgotten Mr Milne's prayer to-night, dear." "O no," the child replied, "but I've *dot* it now, mamma." That sweet child prayed expecting an answer, and she got it, and so will every one who prays in sincerity and truth, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."'

'Now we shall read a parable in which Jesus shews us the picture of one who has got the new heart; of a child of God, renewed *after His own image*, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. Which parable is it, Charlie?'

'I think it is that of the good Samaritan, because he was so like Jesus, when he was so very kind to the poor man who had fallen among thieves.'

'The good Samaritan is a photograph of Jesus. His character reflects Christ's glorious image; for Love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.'

IX.

OUR FATHER'S CARE.

'ARE NOT TWO SPARROWS SOLD FOR A FARTHING? AND ONE OF THEM SHALL NOT FALL ON THE GROUND WITHOUT YOUR FATHER.'

11. *What are God's works of providence?*

God's works of providence are, His most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all His creatures, and all their actions.

'WHAT are we going to read about, mamma?' said little Alice, as her brothers and sister took their seats round the table for their Bible lesson.

'We are going to read the story of Moses. You and Harry like to hear it.'

'Are you going to read about his mamma making the little basket cradle for him, and spreading pitch over it to keep the water from coming in, and putting the little baby in it? I like that story, mamma.'

'And Harry knows who watched the little ark floating in the river Nile?'

'It was Moses' own sister. She was very frightened lest the crocodiles would find her little brother and eat him up; and when she saw Pharaoh's daughter take the baby out of the water, she ran for his own mamma to nurse him.'

'And who do you think it was that made Moses' mother think of making the little ark and putting it into the river *with the* child in it?'

'It was God, mamma. Moses' mother prayed to God to save her little son and not let him be drowned, and He made her think of the best way to save him.'

'And who heard the little baby crying, and made the king's daughter sorry for him and willing to have him for her own son?'

'It was God; for God loved Moses, and would not allow him to be drowned in the river.'

'This beautiful story shews us how wonderfully God takes care of His own people. Even when they are babies, unable to pray to Him, He hears their cry and supplies their wants and preserves them from danger. Do you know, Nellie, what God's loving care of His creatures is called?'

'It is called providence, mamma.'

'*What are God's works of providence*, Charlie?'

'"*God's works of providence are, His most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all His creatures, and all their actions.*"'

'The history of the world is the story of God's providence; of His preserving and governing all His creatures, and all their actions. In what manner does God do this, Charlie?'

'In a *most holy, wise, and powerful* manner.'

'The answer says, God governs the actions of all His creatures. Does that mean that God guides wicked men as well as good men?' asked Nellie.

'You know that God preserves the life of bad men as well as of good men. He is kind to the unthankful and to the evil, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. All their evil deeds come from themselves and from Satan, for only good comes from God; but God is so wise and powerful, that He makes even the wicked actions of bad men to accomplish His own holy purposes. It was very

wicked of Pharaoh to command the little boys to be cast into the river, and yet God made that cruel decree the means of bringing Moses to the king's palace, where he became learned in all the wisdom of Egypt, and so fitted to be the leader of Israel. Why did Pharaoh command the infants to be cast into the river?'

'It was because he wished to make the Israelites weak, and to keep them in bondage.'

'That was Pharaoh's design; but God had decreed or determined to deliver Israel. More than three hundred years before Moses was born, God told Abraham that his descendants would be afflicted in a strange land, and that He would bring them out. This was God's decree, and Pharaoh's decree could not reverse it. Read Pro. xxi. 30.'

'"There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the Lord."'

'Whatever God purposes He does, and neither Satan nor wicked men can hinder Him from executing His own decrees. But God guides His own children in a very different way from that in which He governs the wicked. What is the difference, Charlie?'

'God puts good thoughts into the minds of His own children, and makes them wish to do His will. The psalm we were learning says,

"A good man's footsteps by the Lord
Are ordered aright:
And in the way wherein he walks
He greatly doth delight."'

'It is the joy of God's people to know that He cares for them and makes all things work together for their good. Do you remember how Jesus taught His disciples to trust in God's providence?'

'He told them that even a sparrow would not fall to the ground without our Father, and that God would take far more care of them, because they were of more value than many sparrows,' said Nellie; and little Alice added, 'He told them to look at the lilies of the field and see how beautiful God had made them—far more beautiful than king Solomon's fine clothes—and then they would be sure that God would give them everything they needed.'

'God made the sweet flowers

"To comfort man—to whisper hope
Whene'er his faith is dim;
For whoso careth for the flowers
Will much more care for him."'

'And now, Nellie, you will tell me one thing more about Moses. Of whom was he a type?'

'Moses was a type of Jesus, for he delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage, and Jesus delivers His people from sin.'

'But God preserved the life of Moses, and He allowed wicked men to crucify Jesus. Why was that?'

'It was because Jesus came into the world to die for our sins.'

'When the Jews crucified Jesus, they thought that they had put an end to His claim to be the Messiah; and yet by that most wicked deed God accomplished His eternal purpose to save sinners. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for His grace:
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face."'

'Now, mamma,' said Harry, 'you might tell us a story.'

'I will tell you of an old woman who had learned to trust God's providence. When I was a little girl, my mother took me to see a very good old Scotch woman who lived alone in a little thatched cottage, nearly a mile away from any other house. A friend who was with us said to her, "Mary, are you not frightened to live by yourself in this lonely cottage." "*Frichted*," she replied; "*what wud I be frichted for.* If I can trust my Maker with my soul's salvation, surely I may trust my old frail body to Him."

'That good old woman had learned the meaning of the Saviour's words, "Seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind, but rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you." Her trust in her Father's care was not disappointed. He raised up kind friends who watched over her and supplied all her wants as long as she lived. "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord."'

Here is a Bible lesson from 'The Sparrow,' 'A tiny angel in a bird disguise'—admirably put by Rev. Richard Wilton, M.A.

'A Sparrow lighted chirping on a spray
Close to my window, as I knelt in prayer,
Bowed by a heavy load of anxious care;
The morn was bitter, but the bird was gay,
And seemed by cheery look and chirp to say—
What though the snow conceals my wonted fare,
Nor have I barn or storehouse anywhere,
Yet I trust heaven e'en on a winter's day.
That little bird came like a winged text,
Fluttering from out God's Word to soothe my breast:
What though my life with wintry cares be vext,
On a kind Father's watchful love I rest;
He meets this moment's need, I leave the next,
And, always trusting, shall be always blest!'

X.

THE BROKEN COVENANT.

'OF EVERY TREE OF THE GARDEN THOU MAYEST FREELY EAT: BUT OF THE TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL, THOU SHALT NOT EAT OF IT.'

12. *What special act of providence did God exercise toward man in the estate wherein he was created?*

When God had created man, He entered into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of perfect obedience; forbidding him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.

13. *Did our first parents continue in the estate wherein they were created?*

Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the estate wherein they were created, by sinning against God.

'MAMMA, what is a *special act of providence?*' asked Nellie, when she had read these words.'

'Something extraordinary, quite out of the usual course of God's government, is called a special providence. It is by His constant providence that God makes the sun to rise and set daily, and preserves the lives of all His creatures. But when in answer to the prayer of Joshua, the sun stood still in the midst of heaven for a whole day; when the Israelites walked through the Red Sea on dry land; and when the Hebrew children came unhurt out of the fiery furnace, these were special acts of God's providence.'

'These were miracles, mamma; and the answer to the question is not about a miracle at all, it is, "*When God had*

created man, He entered into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of perfect obedience, forbidding him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death."'

'When God deals with any one in a very unusual manner, it is a special act of providence, though He does not work a miracle. When He commanded Abraham to offer up his son Isaac, this was a special act of providence. It was a very unusual command, given for a special purpose—to prove the sincerity of Abraham's faith by his obedience. What is the special act of providence named in the answer?'

'It is God's entering into a covenant of life with man.'

'You know what the covenant or agreement God made with Adam was. Harry can tell us what God did for Adam and Eve while they were holy and happy like Himself?'

'God put them into a beautiful garden where there were a great many trees, and flowers, and plants of every kind, and a river to water it, and the tree of life of which they might eat and live for ever.'

'And what about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?'

'That was the one, the only one in all the garden of which God said they were not to eat, or they would die.'

'That is the covenant God made with Adam, and he was able to keep it. God had written the first and great commandment on his heart, and now He required him to shew his love by his obedience. This was a special act of providence, because no one else was ever placed in the same position as our first parents. Do you know, Willie, what is the difference between the covenant God made with Adam before the fall, and the covenant He makes now, with those who seek Him?'

'God did not tell Adam to believe in Jesus. I think that is the difference, mamma.'

'That is the great difference. Adam was promised life upon condition of his own perfect obedience to God's law; we are promised life, if we receive the Lord Jesus and trust in His perfect righteousness. When God made this covenant with man, our first parents were not sinners like us. They were like the holy angels who do not need a Saviour, because they do God's commandments, hearkening to the voice of His word. Eden, the garden of delights in which they dwelt, was a holy place like the Paradise above. Read the description of heaven in Rev. xxii. 1, 2.'

'"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."'

'That description of heaven points us back to Eden. A river went out of Eden to water the garden, the tree of life grew in the midst of it, and the Lord God walked there. Our first parents only needed to continue obedient to God to enjoy everlasting blessedness. *Did our first parents continue in the estate wherein they were created?*'

'*Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the estate wherein they were created, by sinning against God.*'

'What is the meaning of *left to the freedom of their own will?*' asked Nellie, when she had repeated this answer.

'God allowed them to choose for themselves whether they would obey Him or not; and by their own choice, their own free will, they disobeyed. God created them, holy like Jesus, with power to resist Satan as He did, yet they yielded to temptation, and so became sinners.'

'But, mamma, why did God let Satan tempt Adam and Eve?' asked little Harry.

'We cannot tell this; but we know that only good comes from God. A little girl once asked her papa this question, and while he was considering how to answer it, her younger brother quickly replied, "Nellie, God knows best." That is the best answer any one can give. God cannot do anything but what is right. Read James i. 13.'

'"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man."'

'In the parable of the tares we have Christ's own answer to all questionings concerning the origin of evil. When the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence, then, hath it tares? what did the householder say? Read Matt. xiii. 28.'

'"He said unto them, An enemy hath done this."'

'This answer should satisfy us that evil does not come from God, although for wise ends it is permitted by Him and overruled for good. It is far better then to think of the way of salvation by Jesus, than to puzzle ourselves about how sin began.'

'Did Adam and Eve perish for ever?' asked Alice.

'Neither Adam nor Eve nor any one of mankind could ever be saved by that broken covenant; but God, full of love and pity, told them of the new covenant. He told them that

"One of Eve's descendants
Not sinful like the rest,
Should spoil the work of Satan,
And man be saved and blest."'

'I have got a story for you now, and you must try to find out what it means.'

'A long time ago, a great king built a fine ship and sent it on a voyage to a distant land. For a few days the wind was favourable, the vessel glided swiftly on her way, and the captain thought not of danger. For a moment the pilot turned the vessel out of its course to examine a dangerous spot marked in the chart, and there she struck on the rocks and was shipwrecked, and her crew were cast on a desolate island. Here their condition was very miserable. They could get no bread; seaweed, shellfish, and injurious herbs, were the only food they could obtain. Without protection from the cold by night or the heat by day, disease reduced them fearfully. The king, who had seen the shipwreck, though displeased with the captain for venturing so near the point of danger of which he had been warned, pitied his forlorn condition, and immediately sent out another fine ship, larger and stronger than the first, to conduct the distressed ones to their destined haven. A few of these feeble dying ones rejoiced when they heard the good news of the ship's arrival. They were so weak that they could not even step on board themselves, but the kind captain bore them in his arms and placed them in the ship, where all their wants were tenderly supplied; and oh, how those saved ones loved that good captain. Many a message they sent on shore to tell of his goodness, and to entreat those still on the desolate island to come and share in his love.

'The captain himself entreated every one of them to come into the ship and be saved, for that ship was so wonderfully built, and had so very skilful a pilot, that it was quite impossible it could ever be shipwrecked. And yet, what do you think most of those foolish men did? Some of them said

they would much rather remain where they were, and others said they were quite able to sail to the good land on the broken pieces of the shipwrecked vessel which were strewed on the shore, and the good captain, though sorely grieved, was obliged to leave them to their own way. He knew well that none but those who were in his ship would ever reach the good land.'

'Alice, dear, do you know the meaning of this story?'

'I think the ship that was wrecked means Adam, when he disobeyed God; and the wonderful ship, that could never be lost, means Jesus, who could never sin.'

'Quite right. The first ship is the broken covenant, and the second ship is the new covenant, ordered in all things and sure.'

'And, mamma, who were the people who thought they could reach the happy land on pieces of the broken ship?'

'All those who, instead of trusting in Jesus, try to save themselves by their own righteousness, are like those foolish men who thought they could cross the ocean on a frail raft, and refused to come into the good ship, and so perished whenever the storm arose. By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified.'

Bless'd be the wisdom and the power,
 The justice and the grace,
That joined in counsel to restore,
 And save our ruined race.

Our Father ate forbidden fruit,
 And from his glory fell;
And we, his children, thus were brought
 To death, and near to hell.

Bless'd be the Lord that sent His Son
 To take our flesh and blood;
He for our lives gave up His own,
 To make our peace with God.

XI.

THE FIRST SIN.

'BY ONE MAN SIN ENTERED INTO THE WORLD, AND DEATH BY SIN; AND SO DEATH PASSED UPON ALL MEN, FOR THAT ALL HAVE SINNED.'

14. *What is sin?*

Sin is any want of comformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.

15. *What was the sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created?*

The sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created, was their eating the forbidden fruit.

16. *Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression?*

The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity; all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression.

'WHAT IS SIN? *Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.*'

'The answer Dr. Watts has given to the question in his little catechism, "What do you mean by sinning against God?" will help you to understand these words. Harry can repeat it.'

'"To sin against God, is to do any thing that God forbids me, or not to do what God commands me."'

'Yes, every wrong thought, word or action, is sin; and every neglect of duty is sin. To what rule should our lives be *conformed* or moulded?'

'*The law of God.*'

'Every departure from the law of God, either in thought, word, or deed, is sin. The history of the first transgression

will, in some measure, help us to understand what an awful thing sin is. *What was the sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created?*'

'*The sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created, was their eating the forbidden fruit.*'

'There is one word in that answer which points out what made it a sin of Adam and Eve to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Which is it?'

'It is called *forbidden* fruit.'

'That is what made it sin. God had forbidden them to take the fruit of that tree, and their doing so was disobedience to God's command. This is sin. Read 1 John iii. 4.'

'"Whosoever committeth sin, transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."'

'In the Greek Testament, instead of the four words, "transgression of the law," there is only one word, which means "lawlessness" or "rebellion." When our first parents sinned, they set aside the law of God, and rebelled against His authority. What induced them to choose the path of disobedience?'

'Satan tempted them.'

'Satan told them what was not true, and they believed Satan's lies rather than God's truth. They forgot all God's goodness to them, and thought only of the one tree which He had *forbidden*, and desired to eat of it. What lies did Satan tell Eve?'

'Satan said, "Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."'

'Satan made God a liar, and this is what he is continually doing. When our first parents believed Satan they made God a liar, and when we believe Satan we do the same. He that

believeth not God, hath made him a liar. What an awful thing this is! God says, "The way of transgressors is hard." What does Satan say of it?'

'He says that it is easy and pleasant.'

'Satan is continually telling boys and girls that God will not punish them though they disobey their parents, and promising them happiness as the reward of doing wrong. Each one of us must choose whom we will believe—God or Satan. What was the consequence of the choice our first parents made?'

'They fell—they became sinners.'

'Whenever they believed Satan, they disobeyed God, and so died spiritually. They lost the image of God, and became like Satan; and by this one sin all mankind became sinners. *Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression?*'

'*The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity; all mankind, descending from him, by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression.*'

'That *all mankind sinned in Adam, and fell with him, in his first transgression,* is the fact stated in this answer; and the reason why is also plainly given. What is it, Nellie?'

'The covenant God made with Adam, was made not for himself alone, but for his posterity.'

'In the covenant of life or of works, as it is often called, Adam represented the whole human family, excepting the Lord Jesus; and when he broke the covenant of life, it became the covenant of death to all mankind. All have broken it.'

'How could Adam represent us so long before we were born?' asked Charlie.

'Adam represented all mankind in the same way that Jesus represents all who believe in Him. Jesus is the second

Adam. He kept the covenant which the first Adam broke. Read Rom. v. 19.'

'"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."'

'The guilt of Adam's first sin is imputed to all mankind, even to infants, whose little graves tell the sad story, that

> "Our father ate forbidden fruit,
> And from his glory fell;
> And we, his children, thus were brought
> To death, and near to hell."'

'But if we believe in Jesus, His whole life of perfect obedience, from His birth at Bethlehem till He rose a conqueror over death, is imputed to us; and His perfect righteousness covers not only the guilt of Adam's first sin, but of all our own transgressions. To us "it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead."—(Rom. iv. 24.) It is for refusing to receive Christ's righteousness, that sinners are condemned. He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him is no sin. Read John iii. 19.'

'"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."'

'Those who, by their own choice, continue in sin, condemn themselves. They will not come unto Jesus, that they might have life. This is the greatest sin any one can commit.'

'I will shew you the words of an epitaph on four children laid in one grave, which states the subject of imputed guilt and of imputed righteousness very plainly. Read these lines, Charlie.'

'Bold infidelity, turn pale and die!
Beneath this stone four sleeping infants lie;
Say, are they lost or saved?
If death's by sin, they sinn'd, for they are here;
If heaven's by works, in heaven they can't appear.
Ah, reason, how depraved!
Consult the sacred page,—the knot's untied;—
They died, for Adam sinn'd,—they live, for Jesus died.'

'Sin is a little word, but its full meaning we can never know. To form any idea of what an evil and bitter thing it is, we must think of all the misery with which it has covered the whole world; and then we must think of what it cost the Lord Jesus to deliver us from its guilt and power. What was it that crucified the Lord Jesus, Alice?'

'It was our sins.'

'It is only at the cross of Jesus that we can learn what sin is. There, too, we learn the preciousness of the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth from all sin. He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.'

'Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood
From Thy riven side which flow'd,
Be of sin the double cure;
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

Not the labours of my hands
Can fulfil Thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
All for sin could not atone:
Thou must save, and Thou alone.'

XII.

MAN'S SINFULNESS.

'THE HEART IS DECEITFUL ABOVE ALL THINGS, AND DESPERATELY WICKED: WHO CAN KNOW IT? I THE LORD SEARCH THE HEART.'

17. *Into what estate did the fall bring mankind?*
The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.

18. *Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?*
The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called Original Sin; together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.

'MAMMA, why is Adam's first sin called *the fall?*'

'The first sin is called *the fall*, because by it, man, who was created in the likeness of God, crowned with glory and honour, became like Satan, the enemy of God and man. Before they sinned, our first parents were the loving children of God, delighting in His friendship; but whenever they sinned, a sad change passed upon them. Were they glad when they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden?'

'No, mamma, they were afraid, and tried to hide themselves amongst the trees of the garden.'

'This shows that they had fallen from the glorious condition in which God had created them *into an estate of sin and misery.* Falsehood had come into their hearts instead of truth, fear

instead of love, an evil conscience instead of the confidence of children toward God. Sometimes I have seen children afraid to meet their kind papa. When are they so, Alice?'

'When we have been naughty, we don't like to meet papa then, because we know he will be angry with us.'

'That is why sinners are afraid of God. They know that they deserve His anger, and like Adam and Eve they vainly try to hide from Him. Because of Adam's sin we are all born sinners. His first act of disobedience brought sin and misery upon all mankind. *Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?*' And Charlie repeated the words:

'*The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called Original Sin; together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.*'

'What is the name commonly given to the sin which we inherit from Adam, and in which we are born?'

'*Original Sin.* But, mamma, how can a little baby, that does not know anything, be a sinner?' asked Charlie.

'Every babe is born with a sinful nature. I will try to explain this to you. You know how much you all like to play with Watch. You are not the least afraid of him.'

'O no, we like to play with Watch—he is such a gentle, good doggie—he never hurts us.'

'But would you like papa to bring you a tiger's little cub for a plaything? Would you fondle it and play with it as you do with Watch?'

'No, mamma, that would be dreadful. I am sure papa would never bring us a tiger to play with. It would soon grow big, and then it would eat us up.'

'How do you know that it would not grow up as gentle as Watch, if you trained it well?'

'Because a tiger is a wild beast. We are quite sure a young one will grow up to be fierce and cruel.'

'You are sure that a young tiger will grow up fierce and cruel, because it is its nature to be so; and in the same way because man's nature is evil, we are sure that little children will grow up sinners. Original Sin is the bitter root from which all actual transgressions proceed.'

'Papa once told us about a gentleman who thought he could train a young tiger, so that it would grow up tame and gentle like a dog. He thought it was quite tame, and often allowed it to lick his hand. One day when doing so the skin broke, and the tiger tasted blood. Then his fierce nature awoke; he sprang upon his master, and tried to kill him.'

'You see, Charlie, that though the tiger seemed tame, its fierce nature was there all the time. It only needed to taste blood, to shew its real character. In the same way a child may seem innocent; the evil in his young heart may lie unseen till some temptation tries him, and then his evil nature will shew itself. Read James iii. 7, 8.'

'"For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: but the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison."'

'What does the answer tell us is awanting in our nature?'

'It says *the want of original righteousness.*'

'That is the sad want of our nature. Man was created righteous, but sin destroyed his *original righteousness,* and his whole nature became evil. The serpent's sting entered his soul, and caused *the corruption of his whole nature.*'

'What is that, mamma?'

'*The corruption of his whole nature*, signifies that man's will, his affections, his intellect, and even his conscience, are diseased. Instead of heart, soul, strength and mind, uniting to serve God, all unite in rebellion against Him. You will find a description of the effects of sin's deadly poison in Isaiah i. 5, 6. Read it, Charlie.'

'"The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment."'

'These words describe the sad state into which sin has brought mankind. A baby has no actual sin, but because the sad disease of Original Sin is in his heart, we know that he will commit *actual transgressions* as soon as he is able; and unless God heals his soul, as he gets older he will grow more and more wicked.'

'Only one babe ever entered this world free from sin.'

'That was Jesus, mamma.'

'Yes, Jesus alone was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. He alone could say, The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.'

'Is Satan the prince of this world?' asked Nellie.

'Yes. Satan is the prince whom we all obey by nature; but Jesus is stronger than Satan, and He came to destroy his works. He became a little child that He might save little children whom Satan had ruined. Little children need Jesus because they are sinners, and need a new heart and a right spirit.'

'You know a prayer about this, Nellie.'

'Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.'

'I know this prayer, mamma—

"Lord, look upon a little child,
By nature sinful, rude, and wild;
O put Thy gracious hands on me,
And make me all I ought to be,"'

said little Harry.

'None but Jesus can change our desperately wicked hearts, and He is now waiting to do this great work for us.'

'Jesus is the second Adam. His perfect righteousness is put upon every sinner that comes to Jesus, instead of *the guilt of Adam's first sin*, and of his own *actual transgressions;* while the Holy Spirit supplies *the want of original righteousness*, and heals *the corruption of his whole nature.* Adam's sin made the tree corrupt and his fruit corrupt. Christ's obedience makes the tree good and his fruit good. The tree is known by his fruit.'

'Just as I am—poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need in Thee to find—
O Lamb of God, I come.'

Just as I am—Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am—Thy love, I own,
Has broken every barrier down;
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone—
O Lamb of God, I come.'

XIII.

MAN'S MISERY.

'YOUR INIQUITIES HAVE SEPARATED BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR GOD, AND YOUR SINS HAVE HID HIS FACE FROM YOU, THAT HE WILL NOT HEAR.'

19. *What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell?*

All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under His wrath and curse, and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever.

'WHAT is *communion with God?*' asked Charlie, as he learned this answer.

'It is the privilege of talking with God as with a friend, such intercourse as Adam enjoyed with God before he sinned. Read Gen. xvii. 22; xviii. 33.'

'"And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham." "And the Lord went His way, as soon as He had left communing with Abraham."'

'Abraham was called the friend of God, because God communed with him. Abraham was at one time like all others, *under God's wrath and curse.* He was an idolater, but God called him and he believed God, and was brought into communion with him. *Communion with God* is the life of the soul. It was the joy of our first parents in Eden, and it is the bliss of heaven. What is it to be without this glorious privilege?'

'It is to be *under God's wrath and curse.*'

'This is spiritual death—the sad state of every person in the world who has not received the Lord Jesus—of every unconverted one. All are by nature dead in trespasses and sins. Read Eph. ii. 12.'

'"That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."'

'To be without God, is to be *under His wrath and curse.* It was because they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, that God left them to wander in their own ways. To what *miseries* does sin expose all mankind?'

'Pain and sickness, and sorrow, and hunger and cold, and death.'

'Sin brought all these *miseries* into the world, and they are common to all mankind. The Lord's people suffer these *miseries in this life* as well as others, but they are safe from the greatest of all miseries. What is it?'

'*The pains of hell for ever.*'

'To those who are without Christ, death is the king of terrors, because it is the gate to everlasting misery. Read Mark ix. 43-48.'

'"And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast

into hell fire: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."'

'These terrible words are spoken to us, by the loving Saviour, to warn us of our danger, and to draw us to Himself. It is because men do not believe that they are in danger of everlasting death, that they refuse to come to Jesus and receive everlasting life. Noah preached to the men of his time for one hundred and twenty years, but they gave no heed to his warnings, and what was the consequence?'

'The flood came and took them all away.'

'And so it is still. While men are saying to themselves, there is no danger, there is time enough to think of religion, death comes and carries them away.'

'But, mamma, surely the world is not so bad now as it was before the flood. There are a great many good people in it now.'

'The heart of man is the very same now that it was then—"deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." You will find Paul's description of all mankind in Rom. iii. 10-18.'

'"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God, &c."'

'Men are so very wicked, that though the gospel is preached to them continually, no one ever comes to Jesus till the Holy Spirit makes him willing. And the worst of all is, that men think themselves very good, and have no idea of their own dangerous condition. You have heard of the great historian, Merle D'Aubigne, who died a few years ago?'

'Was he the good man who wrote the story of Luther finding the Latin Bible in the monastery, mamma?'

'The very same; and I am going to tell you how he became a true Christian. When he was a boy, he knew very little of

Scripture truth; but while he was a young man, Robert Haldane, a very pious Scotch gentleman, who went to reside for a time in Geneva, found the students in that city so very ignorant of the Scriptures, that he opened a class for their instruction, and Merle D'Aubigne became one of his pupils. The epistle to the Romans was the portion of Scripture which Haldane explained to his class; and when he came to the passage which you have just read, he tried to show them that this awful account is God's description of every human heart till changed by His grace.

'This doctrine was quite new to the Geneva students; and it seemed to them so very strange, that they were unwilling to believe that it really was the truth taught in God's word. At last D'Aubigne said, I see that doctrine is in the Scriptures.

'Yes, Haldane replied; but do you see it in your own heart?

'D'Aubigne thought of Haldane's words, till he felt that the description of human nature which he had found in the Bible, was a true picture of his own heart. He saw his own danger, and gladly received the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ. From that time till his death, he laboured diligently in the service of Jesus.'

'Can you tell me, Charlie, why the Bible, which is so full of God's love to man, tells us so often of our awfully sinful condition by nature?'

'It is to make us seek Jesus.'

'Yes. God, in His great love, shows us our sin and our danger, that we may flee to Jesus the great Saviour.'

'He came to raise our fallen state,
And our lost hopes restore:
Faith leads us to the mercy-seat,
And bids us fear no more.'

XIV.

THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

'BY GRACE ARE YE SAVED THROUGH FAITH; AND THAT NOT OF YOURSELVES: IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD.'

20. *Did God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?*

God having, out of His mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer.

'COME, Alice, and let me hear how nicely you can read a few verses in your New Testament.' And when mamma pointed to John iii. 14-16, little Alice read slowly and distinctly:

'"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."'

'Harry, you can tell me why Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness?'

'Yes, mamma, I know that story. The fiery serpent had bitten a great many of the people, and nothing would heal them, for they were dying of the serpent's stings. And Moses prayed to God: and He told him to make a serpent of brass,

and put it high up on a pole, where all the people could see it; and whenever any one who had been bitten looked on it, he was healed.'

'We have, like the Israelites, been bitten with a fiery serpent. You know, Alice, what serpent has bitten us?'

'Satan, the serpent who bit Adam and Eve in the garden; and sin is his sting.'

'Satan is the serpent, and sin is the deadly sting which brought death and all misery into the whole world. No one has escaped this terrible sting. Every one has been bitten, and if not healed, will die of the dreadful disease. But God has told us where to look and be saved. Who was lifted up on the cross for sinners, as Moses lifted up the serpent?'

'It was Jesus, mamma,' said little Harry.

'Now, Alice, I think you will understand the question we have for our lesson. It is, *Did God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?*'

'No, mamma, for God sent Jesus to die to save sinners.'

'That is the meaning of the answer in the Catechism. You can repeat it, Nellie.'

'*God having, out of His mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer.*'

'What is the wonderful agreement made between the Father and the Son for man's salvation called in that answer, Nellie?'

'*A covenant of grace.*'

'It is called *a covenant of grace;* because it was God's grace or free love alone, His *mere good pleasure*, which originated this covenant, and which brings sinners into it. Salvation is all of grace, not of works. It is the fruit of God's great love



The Brazen Serpent.

to those who, having broken the covenant of works, deserved everlasting death.'

'Is the covenant of grace the same as the new covenant, mamma?' asked Nellie.

'The very same; and it is also called the covenant of peace, the everlasting covenant, the better covenant, and the covenant of promise. All these names distinguish the gospel from the covenant God made with Adam, which became the covenant of death to himself and all mankind.'

'When we were reading about the fall, mamma, you told us that Adam and Eve might be saved.'

'We hope they were saved, but not by the first covenant, the law which they had broken. God told them of the covenant of grace, of the Redeemer, who should deliver them from the serpent's deadly sting. Charlie, you can find the first promise.'

'This is the first promise, mamma; it is what God said to the serpent: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Gen. iii. 15.'

'These words tell us of Christ, the seed, conquering Satan when He rose from the grave. The animals slain for sacrifice, and the coats of skin with which God clothed our first parents, also told them of the Redeemer's work. Do you know why Jesus is called our Redeemer?'

'Jesus is our Redeemer, because He bought us with His own precious blood.'

'When a poor Israelite sold himself to a stranger, one of his brethren might redeem him; any near relative, by paying the price due, might redeem his brother and set him free. Lev. xxv. 47-57. Jesus is our kinsman, and he has paid the price of our redemption; not silver and gold, but His own precious blood.'

'Mamma, what is the meaning of *elected some to everlasting life?*' asked Nellie.

'It means that before Adam was created, God saw the whole human race sunk in sin and misery; and in His great love He chose a great multitude, which no man can number, from among them, whom He determined to save. This wonderful truth is called the doctrine of election. In Eph. i. 4, Paul says: "He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world," and the same truth is taught in many portions of Scripture besides.'

'But, mamma, how can we know whether we are elected or not?'

'If we have come to Jesus and have chosen Him as our Saviour and Friend, then we may know that God has chosen us from all eternity; but if we have not yet obeyed the command, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, we have nothing to do with the doctrine of election. It is written for the comfort and instruction of believers, to teach them that nothing can separate them from the love of God in Christ, and that they owe all the glory of their salvation to Him alone.'

'You know who John Bunyan was, I think?'

'O yes, mamma; he was the good man who wrote "The Pilgrim's Progress" and "Holy War."'

'In another book called "Grace Abounding," John Bunyan relates the story of his own conversion; and in it he tells us that he was at one time much perplexed with the fear lest he should not have been elected. At last this thought came into his mind: Search in the Book of God, and see whether there ever was a sinner that trusted in Jesus who was not saved. So he began the search, and read the book through—from the first of Genesis to the last of Revelation—but he could not find one instance of a sinner that ever did come to Christ and

was rejected. So he said to himself, "I will even go: He will not reject me."'

'That was the best way to do, mamma,' said Charlie.

'Yes, that was the right way; for Jesus says, "And him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out," immediately after having stated the doctrine of election in the words, "All that the Father giveth Me, shall come to Me." It is a great mistake to imagine that election places a hindrance in the way of any sinner who wishes to come to Jesus. There is no limit to Christ's "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." On the contrary, whosoever wills and comes, is taught that it is God which worketh in him both to will and to do of His good pleasure; and thus he is encouraged to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling. Supposing some of the poor dying Israelites in the wilderness, instead of looking to the brazen serpent, had turned away their eyes, saying, perhaps God did not design to heal us, what would have become of them?'

'They would have died, and it would have been their own fault, because they would not look to the serpent on the pole and be healed.'

'And if sinners will not obey God's command, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth," they must die in their sins, and it is their own fault. Jesus says, Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life. Believe and live, is the covenant of grace. It is of it that Paul says, Even that which was made glorious (the law or covenant of works) had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. 2 Cor. iii.'

When the children had read this chapter, and mamma had explained to them the great difference between the two covenants—the broken covenant which condemns us, and the

new covenant by which we are saved—she told them the story of the first Greenland Missionaries.

'For ten years these devoted men laboured continually in trying to make the poor degraded Greenlanders understand God's holy law and their own sinfulness; but their teaching made no impression on their darkened minds. At length, when the missionaries were translating one of the gospels, they came to the account of the crucifixion. One of the natives who was assisting with the translation, read the story of redeeming love; his eyes filled with tears, and turning to the missionaries he said, "Why did you not tell us this before?"

'From that time the wonderful love of Jesus in dying for sinners, was the constant theme dwelt upon by the missionaries. The poor Greenlanders listened to the wondrous story; light shone into their dark minds, and many of them became followers of the meek and lowly Jesus.'

'God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.'

'Grace! 'tis a charming sound,
Harmonious to my ear;
Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the earth shall hear.

Grace taught my wandering feet
To tread the heavenly road;
And new supplies each hour I meet,
While pressing on to God.'

XV.

THE ONLY REDEEMER.

'BEHOLD A VOICE OUT OF THE CLOUD, WHICH SAID, THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED; HEAR YE HIM.'

21. *Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?*

The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continueth to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person, for ever.

22. *How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?*

Christ, the Son of God, became man, by taking to Himself a true body, and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her, yet without sin.

'WHAT think ye of Christ? whose son is He? That was the text of the sermon we heard to-day, mamma; and the minister told us that when Jesus was in the world, even the learned Scribes and Pharisees did not know that the Christ, the promised Messiah, was to be God as well as man. When Jesus asked them, "Whose son is He?" they only answered, "The son of David," and they could not tell why David called him Lord!'

'And can you answer the question which so puzzled the Pharisees: If David call Him Lord, how is He his son?'

'Yes, mamma,' Nellie replied, 'Christ is David's Lord, because He is God Almighty, and He is David's son, because Mary His mother was descended from King David.'

taken a human body, been born in a stable and laid in a manger, that He might redeem us from death, is the great mystery into which angels look with adoring wonder.

"Cold on His cradle the dew-drops are shining,
Low lies His bed with the beasts of the stall;
Angels adore Him, in slumber reclining,
Maker, and Monarch, and Saviour of all."'

'Charlie, you can tell me some things from the life of Christ, which shew us that He was really a man like ourselves, with *a true body and a reasonable soul?*'

'He was born a babe, and grew to manhood as we do. He was hungry in the wilderness, and wearied and thirsty when He sat by the well. He fell asleep in the little ship, He wept by the grave of Lazarus, and He died on the cross and was buried.'

'All these circumstances shew us that the Son of God was partaker of human nature, that He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham. He needed to take a human nature that He might die for us, and He needed a divine nature to be able to save us from death. Could He have been our Redeemer had He been only man?'

'No, mamma,' little Alice replied, 'a man could not save us though he was ever so good; but we know that Jesus is God, because He healed so many sick people, made blind men see, and raised the dead. No one but God could do these things.'

'Yes, we know that Jesus is God, and so able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him. Those who

t Jesus is only a very holy man, a perfect example
itation, leave us without a Saviour, for no man can
brother nor give to God a ransom for him. It is
e is both *God and man in two distinct natures, and
for ever*, that He is an all-sufficient Saviour.'
ıamma,' added Charlie, 'the minister told us that
d not be a good man at all if He was not God,
e told the people over and over again, a great many
; He was God; and no good man could say such a

ıly not. What an awful sin it would be for any
to say that he was God. And yet this was what
stantly affirmed, and what He was at last put to
ıffirming; and He shewed the truth of what He had
sing again from the dead on the third day. Who
could destroy death. Do you remember what
id when Jesus shewed him the print of the nails?'
l, My Lord and my God.'
inity of Christ is the truth on which all our hopes
n depend; Jesus cannot be our Saviour unless He
d and our God.
:e Elizabeth was on one occasion trying to explain
f salvation to a deaf and dumb boy, in whom she
at interest. She told him that Jesus stood in the
inners, that He had obeyed God's law, and borne
ment of sin instead of them. But the boy asked,
d one stand for so many?' After thinking for a
Charlotte Elizabeth saw a pile of rose leaves in the
king her ring from her finger, she held it in one
le she lifted a bunch of the withered rose leaves
ther, and holding out both hands to the boy, she
and *so many*.' He grasped the idea at once, and

said, 'the one was worth far more than the many,' and thus he learned the meaning of the expression, 'the precious blood of Christ.'

That dumb boy not only learned to know the truth about Christ, but he learned to know Him as his own Saviour, whom to know is eternal life.

Who is He in yonder stall,
At whose feet the shepherds fall?

'Tis the Lord! O wondrous story!
'Tis the Lord, the King of glory!
At His feet we humbly fall;
Crown Him, crown Him, Lord of all!

Who is He in yonder cot,
Bending to His toilsome lot?

Who is He in deep distress
Fasting in the wilderness?

Who is He that stands and weeps
At the grave where Lazarus sleeps?

Lo, at midnight who is He
Prays at dark Gethsemane?

Who is He in Calvary's throes
Asks for blessings on His foes?

Who is He that from the grave
Comes to heal and help and save?

Who is He that on yon throne
Rules the world of light alone?

XVI.

CHRIST OUR PROPHET.

'MOSES TRULY SAID UNTO THE FATHERS, A PROPHET SHALL THE LORD YOUR GOD RAISE UP UNTO YOU OF YOUR BRETHREN, LIKE UNTO ME.'

23. *What offices doth Christ execute as our Redeemer?*

Christ, as our Redeemer, executeth the offices of a Prophet, of a Priest, and of a King, both in His estate of humiliation and exaltation.

24. *How doth Christ execute the office of a prophet?*

Christ executeth the office of a Prophet, in revealing to us, by His word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation.

'WHAT would you like to read about now?' said the kind mother, as the children took their seats around her for their Bible lesson.

'I don't know, mamma,' Nellie replied, 'but I think it must be about some of the prophets, because the question we have been learning is, *How doth Christ execute the office of a prophet?*'

'That is a very interesting subject. It is Christ the Great Teacher. Let me hear you repeat the answer, Charlie.'

'*Christ executeth the office of a prophet, in revealing to us, by His word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation.*'

'The word prophet means a teacher, and the work or office of a prophet was to make known the will of God to men. The prophets were sent by God.'

'I thought, mamma, that the prophets were men who could tell what was to happen in the future,' remarked Nellie.

'The prophets often did foretell future events. Sometimes they did so to shew men that God had sent them; and often they spoke of the future because they lived before the coming of Christ, and their teaching pointed to Him. The prophets as well as the apostles preached Christ. The prophets spoke of the Saviour who was promised, and the apostles of the Saviour who had been given. This was their office. Little Harry can tell us the names of some of the prophets, I think.'

'Moses, and Samuel, and David were prophets, mamma.'

'Yes, dear; and you know some more, Harry.'

'Elijah, and Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Daniel.'

'These were all great prophets. Moses was the greatest teacher ever lived till Christ came, and he foretold that the Messiah would be a prophet like himself. Read Deut. xviii. 15-19.'

'"The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken, &c."'

'The Jews knew well that the Prophet of whom Moses wrote was the Messiah; and when they had seen the miracle Jesus did when He fed the five thousand, many of them said, This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world. Do you remember what Nicodemus said when he saw Jesus' miracles?'

'It was Nicodemus who came to Jesus by night, mamma, and he said, Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with him.'

'A teacher sent from God, that is a prophet. Many acknowledged Jesus as a prophet, before they received Him

as the Christ. They saw that He was a great teacher before they knew Him as the Saviour. Can you tell me who said, when she received her first lesson from Jesus, Sir, I perceive that Thou art a prophet?'

'It was the woman of Samaria,' said Nellie. 'She saw that Jesus must be a prophet, because, though she had never seen Him before, He knew all about her life.'

'We shall read the story (John iv.) and it will shew you Jesus executing the work of a prophet. You will see what a wonderful Teacher He is; how kind, how wise, how faithful, and how patient.'

After reading that narrative, mamma asked the children if they knew why Jesus asked a drink of water from this woman.

'Because He was very thirsty, mamma,' little Harry replied.

'Yes, He was thirsty; but He had another reason far stronger than that. He wished to teach this woman to ask living water from Him; and He asked a drink from her to shew her that He did not despise her though she was a Samaritan and He a Jew. He was willing to receive a favour from her, and in this way He gained the woman's attention. She saw that He was not like other Jews, and wondered why He had spoken to her. I think you all like when your teacher asks you to do something for him. Do you not?'

'Yes, mamma,' said Harry, 'we like very much when teacher asks us to go a message for him.'

'It makes you feel that he is your friend, and you like to be treated with confidence. You see how kind it was of Jesus to ask water from this woman, and then how patient He was with her ignorance. When she did not understand what He said of the living water, He spoke of her own sins, and she understood Him then. And what did He at last tell her concerning Himself, Harry?'

'He told her that He was the promised Messiah.' He said, 'I that speak unto thee am He.'

'Christ revealed Himself to this woman by His own words and also by His Spirit. It was the Holy Spirit which made this woman believe the words of Jesus and receive Him as her Saviour. Other teachers may tell men the words of God, or we may read them in the Bible, but none but Jesus can give the Holy Spirit.'

'But, mamma, how can we have Jesus for our Teacher now, when He is in heaven?' asked little Alice.

'The answer in the Catechism tells us that. What does it say, Nellie?'

'It says, *By His word and Spirit.*'

'And what does His word mean, Alice, dear?'

'It means the Bible, mamma.'

'The word means the Bible and the preaching of the gospel. Christ speaks to us both in the Bible and by the ministers who preach His word. We shall read another story which will shew you Christ executing the office of a prophet after He had ascended to heaven.' And mamma read the beautiful account of the Ethiopian eunuch returning from Jerusalem; of his sitting in his chariot reading Isaiah the prophet, and of the Spirit sending Philip the evangelist to him. And she showed them in Isaiah liii. the very words which the eunuch had been reading—'He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare His generation? for He was cut off out of the land of the living,' and told them how Philip took these words for his text and preached unto him Jesus, and how the Holy Spirit made the eunuch believe Philip's words and become a disciple of Jesus.

'I think you can tell me now what we must do if we wish to be the disciples or scholars of Jesus?'

'We must read the Bible and listen to the ministers,' little Alice replied.

'Yes, dear, but there is something more we must do. We must feel, like the Ethiopian eunuch, that we need some one to guide us. Who is it?'

'We need the Holy Spirit, mamma,' said Nellie.

'Yes, the Holy Spirit alone can make either the reading or hearing of the word effectual for our salvation. Many listened to the preaching of Jesus Himself, and yet did not believe on Him; while long before He came into the world, those taught by the Holy Spirit saw Christ's day afar off and were glad.'

'Shew me Thy ways, O Lord;
Thy paths, O teach Thou me:
And do Thou lead me in Thy truth,
Therein my Teacher be:
For Thou art God that dost
To me salvation send,
And I upon Thee all the day
Expecting do attend.'

XVII.

CHRIST OUR PRIEST.

'FOR SUCH AN HIGH PRIEST BECAME US, WHO IS HOLY, HARMLESS, UNDEFILED, SEPARATE FROM SINNERS.'

25. *How doth Christ execute the office of a priest?*

Christ executeth the office of a priest, in His once offering up of Himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God; and in making continual intercession for us.

'MAMMA, what is the meaning of *to satisfy divine justice?*' asked Nellie, as she read these words from the Catechism.

'You know that a judge must punish those who break the laws of the land. Justice requires him to do so. God is the judge of the world; we have broken His holy law; and divine justice requires the death of every transgressor; but divine love sent Jesus to die instead of us. His death satisfied divine justice, because He bore the punishment of our sins in His own body on the cross, and now divine justice requires, not the death, but the salvation of every one who believes in Jesus. It is because Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, that God can be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Do you understand now what it is *to satisfy divine justice?*'

'I think I do. It means that we deserved to die for our sins, and that Jesus died that we might live for ever.'

that is the Gospel. Christ died for our sins, according
lcriptures. Human laws do not allow one person to
ad of another; but often debt is paid by one person
her, and then the debtor is free. He cannot be
with a debt which his friend has paid for him.'
namma; that would not be just.'
has paid our debt; and so, if we confess our sins,
aithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse
all unrighteousness. The late Dr. Chalmers tells us
one occasion, when visiting a dying woman, he asked
t she was trusting to for salvation. To his surprise
ed, "Sir, I am trusting to the justice of God." To the
f God! said the good man; surely you do not know
justice of God demands. It demands the death of
ner. "I know it does," said the dying woman; "but
as died for me, and now I am trusting to the justice
or my salvation."'
is a fine story, mamma,' said Charlie; 'I will not
'
that dying woman understood how Christ's death
divine justice; and now, Charlie, can you tell me
re it does for us?'
nswer says, *and reconcile us to God.* That means to
friends with Him.'
t's death is often called the atonement; and that word
reconciliation. If you divide it, you will see that it
ne—ment.'
is, mamma. I never thought of that meaning of the
ore.'
vord atonement is used very often in connection with
fices offered by the priests of old. We shall read
High Priest entered into the most holy place once a

year to make atonement for the children of Israel; and then we shall find the meaning of all that he did pointed out in Hebrews.'

When they had read together Lev. xvi., mamma asked the children, 'Do you think that the death of these bulls and goats could take away the sins of the Israelites?'

'No, mamma,' said Nellie, 'I learned a text which says, "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins!"'

'Then why were these sacrifices offered, Charlie?'

'It was because Christ had not come into the world; and these sacrifices were types of His one sacrifice for sins. After His death no more animals were slain as sacrifices.'

'And what became of the office of the priesthood then?'

'It was done away too; for the priests, as well as the sacrifices, were types of Christ.'

'Yes, Christ is our priest;—He offered up Himself to atone for our sins,—and now what is He doing for us in heaven?'

'*Making continual intercession for us.*'

'Yes, Nellie, Jesus is always praying for His people.

"Jesus on the eternal throne
For sinners intercedes."

Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. Do you remember how the High Priest's breastplate was made?'

'It was made of twelve precious stones; and each stone had the name of one of the tribes of Israel graven on it,' said Charlie.



High Priest.

'And, mamma,' added Nellie, 'the names of the children of srael were engraven on two onyx stones on the shoulders of he ephod.'

'Exod. xxviii.—tells us this, and why the names of the twelve ribes were engraven on the ephod and on the breastplate. Read the 12th and the 29th verses, Charlie.'

'"And thou shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of he ephod, for stones of memorial unto the children of Israel: nd Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord, upon his wo shoulders, for a memorial. . . And Aaron shall bear he names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of udgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy lace for a memorial, before the Lord continually."'

'The High Priest thus bearing the names of the Israelites n his shoulders, and on his breastplate, was a type of Christ esus bearing the names of every one of His people on His eart before God. He says, behold I have graven thee upon he palms of My hands. He can never forget His people. hen there was the golden altar; what was it for, Charlie?'

'The priest burnt sweet incense upon it every morning and vening.'

'The priest did so to typify Christ Jesus offering up the rayers of His people, and making continual intercession for hem. David prays, "Let my prayer be set forth before Thee s incense."'

'Did the priest burn incense every morning and evening to each us that we should pray to God every morning when we ise, and every night before we go to bed?' asked little Alice.

'I think he did; and when we remember that Jesus takes our poor imperfect prayers, and, joined with His own perfect ntercession, presents them before God as sweet incense

(Rev. viii. 3, 4), how great encouragement we have to pray. Read Heb. iv. 15, 16, Charlie, and you will see what is there said about prayer.'

'"For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."'

'"Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."'

'Now, Charlie; tell me in your own words what Christ does for us as our priest?'

'The priest offered sacrifices, Christ offered Himself a sacrifice for our sins; the priest had the names of the tribes graven on his breastplate, Jesus bears the names of His people on His heart; the priest offered incense in the Holy Place, Jesus prays for us, and offers up our prayers in heaven.'

'Yes, Charlie; Jesus is the High Priest of our profession; not like the priests of old who were dying men. Christ Jesus is our priest for ever.'

We shall sing together—

Lo! the great High Priest, ascended,
Pleads the merit of His blood;
Venture on Him, venture fully;
Let no other trust intrude;
None but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good.'

XVIII.

CHRIST OUR KING.

ANIEL ANSWERED AND SAITH UNTO HIM, RABBI, THOU ART THE SON OF GOD; THOU ART THE KING OF ISRAEL.'

Tow doth Christ execute the office of a king?

it executeth the office of a king, in subduing us to Himself, in and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all His and emies.

D the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on His Head, and they put on Him a purple robe, and said, King of the Jews; and they smote Him with their

hy did they do that, mamma?' asked little Alice, when d read these words.

ey did it in mockery, because Jesus had told them that d come into the world to set up His own kingdom. would not have Him to reign over them; and when ring to crucify Him, in cruel mockery they crowned vith thorns.'

amma,' said little Harry, 'my hymn says—

> "For a royal crown of gold
> They have made Him one of thorn;
> Cruel hands that dare to bind
> Thorns upon a brow so kind."'

it even then, when He was nailed on the cross, Jesus had ne in this world. Where was it? If you read verses I think you will know.' And Nellie read:

'"Now there stood by the Cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas, and Mary Magdalene, &c."'

'You mean that Jesus had a throne in the heart of His disciples. He was their King, and they loved Him and obeyed Him.'

'Yes, Nellie. Christ's throne is in the hearts of His people. His disciples were then only a little band, and they did not understand why He should suffer and die; but soon they learned the meaning of all these things, and preached Jesus exalted a Prince and a Saviour. But there is another king who reigns in the hearts of men. Who is he, Harry?'

'It is Satan.'

'Satan is the prince of this world. The heart of man is his palace; and he reigns there till Christ, the stronger than he, conquers him and reigns Himself. The question you have been learning from the Catechism is about this. *How doth Christ execute the office of a King?*' And Charlie repeated:

'*Christ executeth the office of a king, in subduing us to Himself, in ruling and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all His and our enemies.*'

'That answer names five things which Christ does for us as our King. What is the first of these?'

'*Subduing us to Himself*, is the first one.'

'Yes. When Jesus comes to the door of the human heart, He finds it barred against Him; because Satan is reigning within, and He sends the Holy Spirit to dethrone the evil one. Then the sinner opens the door, and the King of glory comes into his heart and reigns there for ever. You remember how fast Saul of Tarsus had locked the door of his heart, against Jesus, when he was persecuting his people?'

'And did he open the door, and let Jesus in, that day when he heard His voice on the road to Damascus?' asked Nellie.

'The words, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest," unlocked the door, and Saul opened it wide when he said, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"'

'Mamma,' said Nellie, 'is that the meaning of the lines—

"Ye gates, lift up your heads; ye doors,
Doors that do last for aye,
Be lifted up, that so the King
Of glory enter may"?'

'That is one meaning of these words; and they also mean that the golden gates of the palace above were opened wide to receive Jesus when He ascended to His heavenly throne. Jesus has a throne in heaven, and a throne in the hearts of His people. Now, Charlie, what does Jesus do for His people after He has subdued them to Himself?'

'*Ruling* comes next, and then *defending us*. I know what ruling means. It is giving us laws.'

'When Jesus reigns in the heart, He writes His commandments there. From the day when Saul acknowledged Christ as his King, his life motto was, WHOSE I AM, AND WHOM I SERVE. He became a good soldier in the King's army; and the King put upon him His own armour to defend him from evil.'

'I know what armour you mean, mamma,' said Nellie; 'it is this,' and she read, '"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench all fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." The minister read these verses, and told us all about the armour, when he was

preaching the sermon to the children about a good soldier of Jesus Christ.'

'I am glad you remembered that, dear; and I hope each one of you will ask the King of glory to write His holy laws in your heart, and put upon you the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. You know Christ's soldiers must fight His and their enemies. Can Harry tell me who are *His and our enemies?*'

'Satan and wicked men are Jesus' enemies, mamma.'

'And sin is Jesus' enemy too,' added Alice.

'Yes, all these are Christ's enemies; and if we are His soldiers, He will make us more than conquerors over them all. I once heard a little boy pray, "O Lord, make us conquerors in the battle." Do you know how we can be conquerors in the life-long war?'

'Because Jesus conquered Satan when He died on the cross. He fights for us,' said Nellie.

'Yes. Jesus conquered sin and Satan for us on the cross; and He conquers them in us by His Holy Spirit. You know, Charlie, who is the last enemy?'

'It is death; for it is called the King of terrors.'

'And yet death, the last enemy, shall be detroyed. Christ has abolished death; and when his people pass through the valley of the shadow of death, they need fear no evil. I once knew a little boy who understood this so well, that when told by a friend that those who love Jesus need not be afraid of death, he at once replied, "I know that; O death where is thy sting, O grave, where is thy victory." And when death was very near, he never spoke of it, but sweetly said, "If I don't get better, Jesus will come Himself and take me to heaven." And Jesus did come and take His little one to receive the "crown for little children above the bright blue

That is how Jesus conquers *His and our enemies.* But
ıswer says, *in restraining* them. What is that, Nellie?'
dont know very well; but I think it means that He
ıot let them do all the wicked things they wish to do.'
ıite right. I see you understand it. Often God
›oints the devices of the crafty, so that their hands
t perform their enterprise. You know the story of
n?'
› was a very bad man. He wanted to kill all the Jews
ɜe he was angry with good Mordecai. And Mordecai
ueen Esther what Haman wished to do, and she told the
and he would not let the Jews be killed, but hanged
n himself.'
ɴd restrained Haman; so that instead of killing the
he brought punishment on himself. There are only two
words in the answer which I wish you to notice now, *us*
ur; because if Christ does not rule and defend *us,*
in and conquer *our* foes, then we must be His enemies.'
ely you will choose Jesus for your King. You will open
›or of your heart that the King of glory may come in.

'O dwell within us,
Strengthen our faith,
King who didst win us
Over from death.
Fashion us here for Thy city above,
Built of heart-palaces, founded in love.
Glad hearts and voices
Worship and sing;
Heaven rejoices,
Jesus is King!'

XIX.

CHRIST'S HUMILIATION AND EXALTATION.

'HE HUMBLED HIMSELF, AND BECAME OBEDIENT UNTO DEATH, EVEN THE DEATH OF THE CROSS. WHEREFORE GOD ALSO HATH HIGHLY EXALTED HIM.'

27. *Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?*

Christ's humiliation consisted in His being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.

28. *Wherein consisteth Christ's exaltation?*

Christ's exaltation consisteth in His rising again from the dead on the third day, in ascending up into heaven, in sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and in coming to judge the world at the last day.

'MAMMA, why is Christ's life on earth called His *humiliation?*' asked Nellie, when she had repeated this answer from the Catechism.

'Because when Jesus came into the world, He veiled the glory He had with the Father in heaven, and became a servant, poor and despised, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death. Do you remember how Jesus answered His disciples when they asked Him, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"'

'He took a little child, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.'

'And on another occasion Jesus said, "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." No one ever humbled himself as Jesus did; therefore God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name that is above every name. Alice knows a verse which tells us what we must learn of Jesus.'

'I can say it, mamma.' And little Alice repeated that precious saying of Jesus: 'Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.' And mamma told them that Christ's humiliation was the heavy yoke of suffering He bore for us. The first thing mentioned in the answer is *His being born;* and what a wonder of wonders this is! Harry can tell us where Jesus was born.'

'In the stable in Bethlehem, mamma; and He was laid in the manger, and His mother was poor.'

'Yes; Jesus, the King of glory, became the babe of a poor woman. Mary was so poor that she was unable to bring a lamb for a sacrifice; she could only bring two doves. This is what is meant by His being born *in a low condition.*'

'And what does made *under the law,* mean?' asked Nellie.

'It means that, when He came into the world, He obeyed His Father's will in everything. Instead of reigning as king, He obeyed the law as a subject. No one ever obeyed like Jesus, for He did no sin; neither was guile found in His mouth. Then Jesus endured *the miseries of this life.* Charlie, what are these?'

'The things men suffer in this life. Jesus was hungry, and thirsty, and wearied, and tempted. He said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head."'

And Alice added: 'The minister repeated that verse in the

sermon to-day; and he told us about a mamma who was reading it to her little son, and the little boy began to cry; and when his mamma asked him why he was crying, he said, "Mamma, if I had been there I would have given Jesus my crib."'

Then little Harry who had been listening to the story of the kind-hearted little boy, said, 'Mamma, I would have given Jesus my crib too.'

And his mamma replied, 'Do you know, Harry dear, that you can give Jesus something far better than your crib? You can give Him your heart. Only think of what Jesus bore for us! He bore something far worse than having no bed on which to rest His weary head. Charlie, what was that?'

'*The wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross.*'

Yes, *the wrath of God* was a burden far, far heavier, than any bodily suffering. It was this which caused Him such agony in the garden, that His sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground.'

'Was it the wrath of God which made Him cry on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"'

'Yes it was our sins that made the Father hide his face from His well-beloved Son; and it was His Father's wrath which drew from Jesus the exceeding bitter cry. Jesus drank the cup of the wrath of God to the very dregs, that we might drink the cup of salvation. Then surely we should love Him. If we follow Him now, meekly bearing our cross, we shall be exalted with him hereafter.'

'I can repeat the next question, mamma,' said Charlie, and he repeated: *Christ's exaltation consisteth in His rising again from the dead on the third day, in ascending up into heaven, in sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and in coming to judge the world at the last day.*

'Christ's *exaltation* is the reward of His *humiliation*. His *umiliation* was ended, for ever ended, when the stone was olled away from the door of the sepulchre: and His *exaltation* egan on that morning when He rose a conqueror over death. While He lay in Joseph's tomb, even His own disciples hought that His enemies had overcome Him; but when He rose from the dead, their sorrow was turned into joy; and hen they saw Him ascend into heaven, they knew that the 'ather had exalted Him a Prince and a Saviour. And now, harlie, can you tell me when Christ's exaltation will be omplete?'

'The last thing in the answer is, *In coming to judge the orld at the last day*.'

'Yes, at the last day Jesus will receive the full reward of ll His sufferings. Then all enemies will be put under His eet, for death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed. And the hole multitude of the redeemed, gathered around the throne, ill sing aloud, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive ower, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and lory, and blessing." The prospect of this great reward omforted Jesus in the days of His humiliation. Read Iebrews xii. 1-3.'

And Charlie read: 'Let us run with patience the race that s set before us, looking unto Jesns the author and finisher of ur faith; who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured he cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right and of the throne of God.'

'That passage shows us what we should learn from the umiliation and *exaltation* of Jesus. If we suffer with Him, ve shall also reign with Him. Do you remember how Jesus ppeared to the apostle John, when he was in the Spirit, on he Lord's-day?'

'Yes, mamma; that was when John was banished to the island of Patmos for loving Jesus, and preaching the gospel.'

'Jesus appeared to comfort His beloved disciple in his exile; and He told him to write a letter to each of the seven churches of Asia. Every one of these letters closes with a beautiful promise to those who take up their cross and follow Jesus to the end. You might read the last of those precious promises now. It is in Revelation iii. 21.'

And Nellie read: 'To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne.'

Go to dark Gethesmane,
 Ye that feel the tempter's power,
Your Redeemer's conflict see;
 Watch with Him one bitter hour;
Turn not from His griefs away:
Learn of Jesus Christ to pray.

Follow to the judgment-hall;
 View the Lord of life arrainged,
O the wormwood and the gall!
 O the pangs His soul sustained!
Shun not suffering, shame, or loss;
Learn of Him to bear the cross.

Calvary's mournful mountain climb;
 There, adoring at His feet,
Mark that miracle of time,
 God's own sacrifice complete.
'It is finished!' hear the cry:
Learn of Jesus Christ to die.

Early hasten to the tomb,
 Where they laid His breathless clay;
All is solitude and gloom;
 Who hath taken Him away?
Christ is risen; He meets our eyes:
Saviour, teach us so to rise.

XX.

REDEMPTION APPLIED.

:ORDING TO HIS MERCY HE SAVED US, BY THE WASHING OF REGENERATION, AND RENEWING OF THE HOLY GHOST.'

How are we made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ?

e are made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ, by the tual application of it to us by his Holy Spirit.

How doth the Spirit apply to us the redemption purchased by Christ?

e Spirit applieth to us the redemption purchased by Christ, by working in us, and thereby uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling.

EDEMPTION! This word occurs a great many times in ' Scripture. Do you know what it signifies, Nellie?'

[t means salvation.'

Redemption is salvation; but the word signifies bought t, and points out that a price has been paid to save us. :he Jews, redemption at once suggested deliverance from ery by the payment of a price. When a Jew had become oor, that he had sold himself and his possessions, any of relatives might redeem him and his land by paying the e due. (See Lev. xxv. 25-27, 47-52.) What did this em of redemption, practised by the Israelites, typify?'

Christ redeeming sinners.'

Yes. It was a type of the redemption purchased by ist with His own precious blood. Read 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.'

'Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with uptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain

conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."'

'When Jesus died on the cross, He paid the full price of our redemption. Read Heb. ix. 12.'

'"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."'

'Jesus obtained eternal redemption for us, when on the cross He finished the work which He came into the world to do. What great gift did He receive from the Father, and bestow upon men, after He ascended to heaven?'

'The gift of the Holy Spirit.'

'The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, equal in power and glory with God the Father and God the Son. The coming of the Holy Spirit into our hearts is so needful for our salvation, that Jesus said to His disciples, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you."' (See John xvi. 7.)

'Because Jesus died, the Holy Spirit is given to us. And what is His work?'

'The Holy Spirit wrote the Bible, and He teaches us to understand it.'

'The Holy Spirit persuades sinners to believe the Word of God, and to receive the Lord Jesus. This is working faith in them; and faith unites them to Christ, as the branch is united to the vine.'

'Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches."'

'Yes; but we are not branches of the true vine, till the Holy Spirit, *by working faith in us*, engrafts us into Christ. The Bible is the instrument the Spirit uses for this end; and

sometimes He brings its precious words to the sinner's remembrance in a very remarkable manner. A young man, employed in a telegraph office in a town in England, became deeply concerned about his salvation. One morning, after having passed a sleepless night, he came to the office in such anxiety, that he did not know what to do. Soon he was called to attend to a telegram. Having taken down the address of the sender, and of the person to whom it was sent, he wrote the words of the telegram, which were these:—

'BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD, WHICH TAKETH AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD. IN WHOM WE HAVE REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD, THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS, ACCORDING TO THE RICHES OF HIS GRACE.

'The young man received this message, as sent by God to him, and found rest in the Saviour.

'A servant girl in the town had written a letter to her brother, telling him that she was in distress about her soul. Her brother was unable to reply to her letter at once, as he was going from home, and so he sent his sister this telegram. The Holy Spirit prepared the heart of the young man to receive the words as a message from heaven, and thus brought him to Jesus, and made him a partaker of *the redemption purchased* by Christ.'

'Various emblems are employed in Scripture to describe the Spirit's work in drawing sinners to Jesus. Can you tell me some of them, Charlie?'

'Rain is one—dew is another—and wind is another.'

'Fire and oil are emblems,' Nellie added.

'Each of these illustrates the gracious influence of the Spirit on the soul. Listen attentively while I read you an extract from a lecture on this subject by the late Professor Andrew Symington. His words are—

"Let us honour the Lord the Spirit. This is the *wind*, invisible, yet refreshing, that blows life, and verdure, and beauty, and fruit, into the withered garden. This is the *dew*, silent, yet powerful, that penetrates the hidden root of the lily, making it to expand its meek beauty, and dispense its sweet odour, even among thorns. This is the *rain* that distils on the tender herb, that falls on the mown grass,—the former and the latter rain that gives the spring, and consummates the harvest. This is the *shower* which, when poured down from on high, makes the wilderness become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field to be counted for a forest. This is the *well of water* which satisfies the thirsty soul, and is, indeed, a well springing up into everlasting life,—the *river* whose streams make glad the city of the Lord, and heal wherever they flow. This is the holy *fire* that at once illumines the dark mind, purifies the unholy heart, kindles the glow of sanctified affections, and often touches with seraphic warmth the lips that were lifeless and dumb. It is the precious *oil*, healing, emollient, and fragrant, which descends from the Head to all the members of the body. The Spirit is the *teacher* leading into all truth,—the *witness* testifying a filial relation to God,—the *seal* setting apart and preserving unto the day of redemption, and in the soul the *earnest* of the inheritance."'

'Are all these emblems in the Bible, mamma?'

'Every one of them; and they are all used to teach us the great importance of having the Spirit, and how precious is His influence. It is He who sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts, and unites us to Jesus, in whom we *have* redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.'

XXI.

EFFECTUAL CALLING.

'MAKE HASTE, AND COME DOWN; FOR TO-DAY I MUST ABIDE AT THY HOUSE. AND HE MADE HASTE, AND CAME DOWN, AND RECEIVED HIM JOYFULLY.'

31. *What is effectual calling?*

Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, He doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel.

'PLEASE, mamma, will you help me to learn my question? I have read it a great many times, but I cannot remember it, and I do not understand it very well.'

'Read it to me, dear, and I will try to explain it to you,' and Nellie read:

'*Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel.*'

'The section of the Catechism which you last learned, shews us what Christ Jesus has done *for* us; this answer and the two which precede it, shew us what the Holy Spirit does *in* us, or *how we are made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ.*'

'Do you know what *calling* means, Nellie?'

'O yes, mamma; *calling* means inviting us to come to Jesus, but I do not know what *effectual* means.'

'Do you remember the parable of the great supper to which many guests were invited?'

'I know that story,' said little Alice; 'it is about a kind nobleman who made a grand supper, and asked a great many people to come to it. But when it was all ready, instead of coming, every one made some excuse, and the nobleman was very angry with them, and sent his servants to invite the poor ragged people in the streets and lanes; and they did not make excuses, but were very glad the good man had invited them.'

'That is the story; but you know that a parable is a story with a spiritual meaning. Charlie will tell us waht the parable means.'

'I think the supper means the gospel; and ministers and teachers are the servants who were sent to say, Come. Those who made excuses are the people who love money and pleasure more than Jesus; and the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind, are those who feel they need Jesus, and are glad to come to Him and be saved.'

'Quite right, Charlie; and now I think you can tell me which of those invited were *effectually called?*'

'Those who came, mamma; the poor people.'

'And why did those first invited not come?'

'It was very bad of them,' said little Harry; 'they just deserved to get no supper.'

'And yet I am afraid we have all treated Jesus in the very same way those people treated the good nobleman who made the feast. We have often made excuses, and we need the Holy Spirit to make us poor in spirit and willing to come to Jesus.'

'Is that *convincing us of our sin and misery*, mamma?'

'Yes, dear; when the Holy Spirit comes into the heart, He

shows us that we need a Saviour, and that Jesus is the very Saviour we need, and makes us glad to receive Him. This is *enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, &c.*'

'Is effectual calling the same as conversion, mamma?'

'The very same. It is also called being born again, passing from death unto life, from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God. All these figures are employed to shew us the greatness of the work of the Holy Spirit when he effectually calls sinners. The story of Zaccheus is a beautiful example of *effectual calling*. You know who he was?'

'He was the little man who climbed up a tree to see Jesus passing by. Was he converted that very day, mamma?' asked Nellie.

'He was converted that very hour. When Jesus said to him, "Zaccheus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house;" the Holy Spirit put faith into his heart, and Zaccheus was a new man when he made haste, and came down, and received Him joyfully. He received Jesus into his heart before he received Him into his house.'

'I thought people needed to be very sorry for their sins before they came to Jesus,' Nellie remarked.

'That is a very common mistake, and one which Satan uses to hinder sinners from at once coming to Jesus. God's command is, Come now.'

'If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all.'

'Read Luke xix. 8, 9, and you will see how sincerely Zaccheus repented of his covetousness when he had received Jesus,' and Charlie read:

'"And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have

taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house."'

'It was the wonderful loving-kindness of Jesus in forgiving him and in condescending to be his guest, that made Zaccheus repent of his evil ways and resolve to sin no more. Godly sorrow is the fruit of forgiveness. When Zaccheus thought of how Jesus had loved him, he could not help feeling sorry for having grieved Him.'

'Did Zaccheus open the door of his heart, and let Jesus come in, when He bade him come down from the tree?'

'Yes, Zaccheus did not wait a moment, but received Jesus at once; and He brought light and joy into his soul, and made him strong to fight against sin. What gift did Jesus promise to send His disciples when He had ascended to heaven?'

'He promised to send them the Holy Spirit.'

'And He promises to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him. I will tell you how the Holy Spirit came into the heart of a little boy one Sabbath day. He was listening to an address on the words, "Behold I stand at the door and knock," and the gentleman who was speaking observed tears running down his cheeks. At the close of the meeting he spoke to the boy, and kindly enquired why he had been crying during the service. The boy replied, "When you were telling us about Jesus standing at the door of our hearts knocking to get in, I could *na thole* to think I had *keepit* Him out *sae lang;*" and when asked if he wished to let Him in now, he said "*Aye.*" Then the good gentleman told him that he had only to pray, "Lord Jesus, come into my heart," and He would come and dwell with him for ever. A few days afterwards, the boy told his friend that Jesus had come into



'Behold I stand at the door and knock.'

his heart; and when asked how he knew this, he said, "because I canna help always thinking about Him, and always speaking about Him, and always speaking to Him."'

Thus the Holy Spirit *convinced* that little boy *of his sin* in having kept Jesus out of his heart so long; *enlightened his mind* by shewing Him the love of Jesus in still waiting to come in; and *renewed his will*, making him glad to receive Him. In the verse Alice learned this morning, David tells us how he embraced the Saviour. Let me hear it, Alice,' and the child repeated:

'When Thou didst say, Seek ye My face,
Then unto Thee reply
Thus did my heart, Above all things
Thy face, Lord, seek will I.'

Adding, 'papa told me, that when Jesus said to David, "Will you take me for your friend?" David said, "Yes, I will." That is the meaning of it, mamma.'

'Yes, dear; the Holy Spirit *persuaded and enabled* David to give his heart to Jesus. This is the wonderful work of God among men described in Psalm cvii. That Psalm shews us four pictures of the Holy Spirit bringing sinners to Jesus. In the first, we see a company of travellers who have lost their way in the wilderness, led home by the right way; the second shews us a band of captives chained in a dark dungeon, brought to light and liberty; then we see sick ones drawing near to death, healed; and storm-tossed mariners brought into the haven. And you know the joyful chorus in which all these saved ones celebrate their deliverance. We shall sing that sweet song of praise now.'

'O that men to the Lord would give
Praise for His goodness then,
And for His works of wonder done
Unto the sons of men.'

XXII.

JUSTIFICATION.

'AND BY HIM ALL THAT BELIEVE ARE JUSTIFIED FROM ALL THINGS, FROM WHICH YE COULD NOT BE JUSTIFIED BY THE LAW OF MOSES.'

32. *What benefits do they that are effectually called partake of in this life?*
They that are effectually called do in this life partake of justification, adoption, and sanctification, and the several benefits which, in this life, do either accompany or flow from them.

33. *What is justification?*
Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.

'IT is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? That was the text, mamma,' said little Alice, when she and her brothers and sister had taken their seats around the table for their Bible lesson.

'And do you know the meaning of that text, dear?'

'O yes, mamma, I know what it means, for Mr — told us. He said that when a man was brought before the judge and blamed for having stolen or done some other wicked thing, the judge enquired all about it, and if he found out that the man had not done the bad thing, he *justified* him and set him free; but if he saw that he was guilty, he *condemned* him to be punished.'

'That is the way in which men are justified or condemned, when accused of crimes against human laws; but the text

speaks of God justifying sinners, and you know that He cannot do so by pronouncing them innocent. How then does God justify?'

'God justifies sinners because Jesus died for them,' Nellie replied. 'There is a passage in Rom. iii. which Mr — read to us:—Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus . . . that He might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.'

'That is the answer to the all-important question, How should man be just with God? Repeat the Catechism answer to the question, *What is Justification?* Charlie.'

'*Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.*'

'Do you know why justification is called *an act*, not a work?'

'Our teacher told us that *an act* meant something that is done all at once,' Charlie replied.

'That is it. The sinner is justified all at once. The moment he receives Jesus, all his sins are pardoned, and God accepts him as righteous for His sake. In Zech. iii. we are shewn a picture of how God justifies the sinner. Read verses 3-5.'

And Nellie read, 'Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before Him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him He said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by.'

'Charlie, you can tell me what Joshua's filthy garments represent.'

'The filthy garments are our sins which God takes away; and the change of raiment is the robe of Christ's righteousness, with which God clothes us.'

'Yes, Joshua was the high priest, a faithful servant of God, and yet all his services could not justify him before God, for we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. Joshua, the high priest, could only be accepted for the righteousness of Christ imputed to him.'

'Mamma, when the younger son in the parable came home, the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe and put it on him. Does that mean the same as clothing Joshua with garments?'

'The very same. The most holy man on earth, and the greatest sinner alike, need the righteousness of Christ imputed to them.'

'But what is *imputed*, mamma?' asked Nellie.

'*Imputed* signifies accounted to us. What Jesus did for us, God counts the same as if we had done it ourselves. God *imputed* our sins to Jesus when He bore them in His own body, and He *imputes* Christ's obedience to us whenever we receive Him by faith. I think you can tell me now why justification is called an act of God's *free grace?*'

'*Grace* means something that we do not deserve, and *free* is without money and without price.'

'The greatest of all blessings, the pardon of sin, flows from free grace and dying love, and it becomes ours by faith alone. Not of works, lest any man should boast. Little Alice knows a text about forgiveness of sin.'

'This is it, mamma: "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake." Does that mean little children like Harry and me?'

'It includes all who truly love the Lord; little children like you and Harry, and older people too, for all receive forgiveness in the same way as little children. The learned Hebrew scholar, Professor Duncan, tells us that after he had learned to know Christ, he used often to repeat the little prayer his mother had taught him in infancy:—

This night I lay me down to sleep,
I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
Take me to heaven for Jesus' sake.'

'Does for Jesus' sake mean *only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us?*' asked Nellie.

'Yes, dear, and that is the only way a sinner can be justified; and how blessed to know that we are invited to come at once to Jesus, and to receive a full and free forgiveness. We need only say from the heart—

Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come.'

'But, mamma, I have read of people seeking salvation for a long, long time, before they found it,' added Charlie.

'That is because sinners are very slow to believe that God is willing to receive them just as they are, full of sin; and they often wait long thinking to make themselves better. They do not take God at His word, and at once receive His offered forgiveness.'

'I once read a story which will help you to understand this. An ignorant negro and his master, a well informed white man, were both convinced of their need of a Saviour, while attending

the same prayer meeting. The negro very soon found peace in believing, but the white man's anxiety continued for a long time. At length he resolved to have a conversation with the happy negro. When he met with him, the white man asked the negro, "Can you tell me this, How is it that you, who had very little Scripture knowledge before, found peace so soon; while I, who have known the Bible all my life, only seem to grow worse and worse?"

'"O yes, massa," replied the negro, "me tell you that. A rich man offer you a new coat, and you look at the one you have on, and say, my coat not very bad, it will do a while yet, and you not take the new coat. Then *de* rich man offer me *de* new coat, and *me* have nothing but *dis* old blanket, and me glad to fling it away and get *de* new coat. That is the way, massa. Me glad to get Christ at once, because me have no righteousness of my own."

'"You are right, Sam!" his master exclaimed, as he grasped the rough black hand held out to him; "I *have* been trying to fix up my old coat, but, thank God, I am done with it now. I'll have on the robe of Christ's righteousness, as well as you, and I see that will bring me peace and joy. God bless you, Sam; you have taught me a precious truth."'

'Cast your deadly doing down,
Down at Jesus feet;
Stand in Him, in Him alone,
Gloriously complete.'

XXIII.

ADOPTION.

'BEHOLD, WHAT MANNER OF LOVE THE FATHER HATH BESTOWED UPON US, THAT WE SHOULD BE CALLED THE SONS OF GOD.'

34. *What is adoption?*

Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God.

'FOR ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.'

'Mamma, what is the spirit of bondage?' asked Charlie, when he had read these words.

'It means the feeling with which a slave serves his master. He obeys only from fear of the cruel lash. God does not wish such service. He gives to His children the spirit of adoption. You know what that is?'

'It is the loving feeling of a child to his father.'

'God wishes His children to delight in His service, as children who love their father, and not as slaves who dread their master. Luther tells us that in childhood he was so trained, that he used to turn pale with terror when he heard the name of Christ. He imagined Him sitting on a rainbow full of terrors, needing to have His wrath towards men pacified by the intercession of the Virgin Mary. This was the spirit of bondage. But when Luther learned the way of forgiveness

by faith in Jesus alone, he received the spirit of adoption. Then he joyfully looked up to God as His loving Father. You can repeat the Catechism answer to the question, *What is adoption?*' and Charlie repeated:—

'*Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God.*'

'You have sometimes heard of benevolent persons taking poor children into their families, and bringing them up as their own sons and daughters.'

'Yes, mamma; papa told us about a great many poor homeless little boys and girls, who have been taken over to Canada, and have found homes there. Kind farmers receive them into their own houses, and take care of them, just the same as if they were their own children.'

'And,' Nellie added, 'papa told us about one little boy whom a good farmer had adopted. When a friend from Scotland went to see him, the child brought him an album with the likenesses of the family and their friends; and, when shewing him the farmer and his wife, the happy little boy called them papa and mamma, and their children brothers and sisters, and their friends uncles and aunts and cousins. The little Scotch boy loves them all, just the same as if he were one of themselves.'

'How cheering it is to think of these poor little ones as adopted by Christian fathers and mothers. These Canadian farmers receive the little strangers into the number of their own children, and give them all the privileges of sons, though born in a foreign land, and the children of wicked parents: their past life is all forgotten, and they live in the sunshine of loving homes. Do you know, Charlie, where these children are found?'

'The city missionary finds them wandering in the streets. Sometimes he finds one lying in a corner, hungry and cold, and ragged and dirty, and he takes him to one of the homes, and then he is washed and clothed and fed and taught, and after a while taken away to Canada, and some kind friend there adopts him.'

'That is how God adopts His children. The Holy Spirit finds them wandering in the streets and lanes of the City of Destruction. He finds them wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, and He bathes them in the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, and feeds them with the bread of life, and covers them with the garment of salvation, and brings them into the family of God. Read Jer. iii. 19, and you will see how God receives sinners into His family,' and Charlie read:—

'"But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? and I said, Thou shalt call me My Father; and shalt not turn away from me."'

'I know a text about sons of God, mamma,' said little Alice. 'Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.'

'That is a very beautiful text; and now you will tell me some of the privileges to which the sons of God have a right. You know what privileges a child enjoys in his father's house, Alice?'

'Love is one of them, mamma. His papa and mamma and all his brothers and sisters love him.'

'Yes; love is the source from which all other blessings flow. It is the great privilege of the sons of God to enjoy the love of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and of the

whole family of God. Now you must tell me some other privileges which the children of a kind father enjoy?'

'They get food and clothes, and books to read, and teaching at school, and everything they need. Papa is always giving us nice things.'

'And our heavenly Father gives His children every thing they need. In His Word He provides milk for His little ones, and strong meat for those who are able to bear it; and He clothes them with the robe of Christ's righteousness, and He places them in the school of the Holy Spirit, where they are educated and trained for the home above. Can you tell me why the answer says, that those who are adopted *have a right* to all these privileges?'

'It is because Christ died for them,' said Nellie.

'That is it. When sinners come to Jesus, they become joint-heirs with Him, and have a right to the inheritance which He purchased.'

'The inheritance means heaven, mamma.'

'Heaven is the Father's house where are many mansions. While in this world, the children of God know only a very little of their Father's love. They are children at school, often absent from their Father; but when their school-days are over, their Father will take them home to Himself. We shall read the account of the home above, given us in the last chapters of Revelation.'

'"And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."'

'That is a wonderful description of

Our Father's house on high,
Home of the soul, so dear.'

'There is one thought suggested by the word *adoption*, which we must never forget. It is the reason why we need to be adopted into the family of God. Does a father ever adopt his own son?'

'O no, mamma, he could not make him his son when he is his son already. It is the child of a stranger who is adopted.'

'And that reminds us that we are by nature strangers to God and children of Satan. We are not born children of God, but need to be brought into His family by an act of free grace. You know how sinners can become sons of God?'

'By believing in Jesus.'

'Yes. Whenever we believe in Jesus, we are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.'

'God says to each one of us, "Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, Thou art the guide of my youth."'

'Such pity as a father hath
Unto his children dear;
Like pity shews the Lord to such
As worship Him in fear.'

XXIV.

SANCTIFICATION.

'BUT THE PATH OF THE JUST IS AS THE SHINING LIGHT, THAT SHINETH MORE AND MORE UNTO THE PERFECT DAY.'

35. *What is sanctification?*

Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.

'I CAN say a text,' said little Harry, as he climbed mamma's knee and repeated, 'The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.'

'That is a beautiful text. Do you know the meaning of it, Harry?'

'O yes, for papa told me. The sun is the shining light; and when it begins to rise in the morning, it is not very light,—but as it rises higher and higher, the light grows brighter and brighter, till it is at the very highest at twelve o'clock. Then it is perfect day. And good people are just like the sun. They are always shining more and more—that means growing better and better—till they get to heaven.'

'And what must we do if we wish to be always growing more and more like Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness? You can tell me, Alice dear.'

'We must ask the Holy Spirit to come into our hearts.'

'Yes. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to make the

children of God like Him, and this work is called sanctification.'

'That is what our question is about. I can say it, mamma,' and Nellie repeated, *Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled, more and more, to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.*

'I would like you to notice in what respect Justification, Adoption, and Sanctification are the same; and also what is the difference between them. They all come from the same source. What is it?'

'*God's free grace,*' Charlie replied.

'That is it. We owe every blessing to free grace alone; but justification and adoption are called *acts* of free grace, and sanctification *the work* of free grace. Can you tell me why?'

'It is because sanctification goes on as long as God's people are in this world.'

'That is the great difference. Whenever a sinner comes to Jesus, he is justified and made a child of God; but he is not completely sanctified till he gets to heaven. His life-work is to grow more and more like Jesus. What does the answer say of this work in us, Charlie?'

'It says, *We are renewed in the whole man after the image of God.*'

'You know that man was created in the image of God. Sin defaced God's image, and man became like Satan. But, when sinners come to Jesus, the Holy Spirit begins to restore God's image to their souls. They are *renewed in the whole man.* That is, their minds are renewed, so that they often think of God; their wills are renewed, so that they wish to obey God; and their hearts are renewed, so that they love what God loves, and hate what God hates.'

'But what does *to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness*, mean, mamma?' asked Nellie.

'Sin and righteousness are there represented as two masters, each seeking to rule over us; but when we come to Jesus, we must give up sin, the old master, count him dead, and serve righteousness, our new master. We shall read Romans vi. and it will help you to understand what it is *to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness*. The sixteenth verse will make it quite plain to you, I think.'

And Charlie read: 'Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?'

'If we are Christ's servants, we must be always striving against sin, and He will enable us to overcome sin. He will write His laws in our hearts, and make us more and more like Himself. Do you remember that Christian, when in the house of the Interpreter, was shewn a fire burning against a wall?'

'Yes, mamma; and there was one always pouring water on it to put it out, and yet the more water was poured on it, the fire burned the brighter.'

'How was that?'

'It was because there was one behind the wall who was always pouring oil into the fire. That was what made it burn, so brightly that all the water could not put it out.'

'And what did the Interpreter tell Christian was the meaning of what he saw?'

'He told him that the fire was the love of God which the Holy Spirit had kindled in the heart; the one who poured water on it was Satan, who is always trying to destroy God's work; and He who poured in oil was Christ, continually giving His people grace to resist Satan.'

'That is how God sanctifies His people. He teaches them by His Word, and gives them new supplies of grace every day, and makes every thing which befals them work out His own gracious purpose towards them. But we must be workers together with God. Who is the pattern we must continually follow, if we would daily become more and more like God? You know, Alice?'

'We must follow Jesus. He is God. My hymn says, Ask—*What would Jesus do?*'

'The apostle John tells us that every one that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as Christ is pure. Do you know what hope he speaks of?'

'It is the hope of getting to heaven, mamma.'

'And of being perfectly holy like Jesus. The joy of heaven is to be with Christ and to be like Him. It is the pure in heart who shall see God—those who are always asking, *What would Jesus do?* But how can we be always doing so? Jesus tells us how we shall be able to bring forth much fruit.'

'Jesus says, 'Abide in Me,' Nellie replied.

'That is the way. Live near to Jesus, and be strong in Him. Paul said, I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me.'

The late Rev. Dr. Macleod tells us that on one occasion he was requested to visit a dying child of whom he had been told some remarkable things. The boy was but eleven years of age, and had been ill for three years. During all that time the child had been growing more and more like Jesus. Though suffering excrutiating pain, and never enjoying one day's rest, he showed the most patient submission to the will of God, never uttering a murmuring word.

Dr. Macleod looked at the child in wonder, and then spoke a few sympathising words to him, and the boy looked at him

with his blue eyes—he could not move; it was the night before he died—and then he breathed into his ear these few words:—'I AM STRONG IN HIM!' These were the words of a feeble child in a poor home; but if we make them our own, we shall grow stronger and stronger, more and more like Jesus, till He sees His own image reflected in our souls, and comes to take us to Himself.

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint."

'If washed in Jesus' blood,
Then bear His likeness too!
And as you onward press,
Ask—*What would Jesus do?*

.

Be brave to do the right,
And scorn to be untrue;
When fear would whisper "Yield!"
Ask—*What would Jesus do?*

Give with a full free hand,—
God freely gives to you,—
And check each selfish thought
With—*What would Jesus do?*

Then let the golden thread,
Woven your life-work through,
Reflecting heaven's own light
Be—*What would Jesus do?*'

XXV.

PEACE AND JOY.

'I KNOW WHOM I HAVE BELIEVED, AND AM PERSUADED THAT HE IS ABLE TO KEEP THAT WHICH I HAVE COMMITTED UNTO HIM AGAINST THAT DAY.'

36. *What are the benefits which, in this life, do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification?*

The benefits which, in this life, do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification, are, assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end.

'MAMMA, what is *accompany or flow?*' asked Nellie, when she had read these words.

'You know that to *accompany*, means to come along with; and to *flow*, is to spring out of, as a river flows from its source. You can tell me from what source every blessing comes to man?'

'God's free grace is the source.'

'Yes, God's free grace is the source from which the river of the water of life flows; and when a sinner is justified, a stream from this river flows into his soul, and makes it like a watered garden, and then the plants of righteousness sown there spring up. Some of these plants are named in the answer you have been reading. What is the first one?'

'*Assurance of God's love.*'

'That is the blessed confidence that God delights to pardon. It is such a view of God's love as casts out the fear that hath torment. Assurance of God's love is a plant of our heavenly

Father's planting, and beside it another heavenly plant springs up.'

'*Peace of conscience.* That is the next one, mamma,' said Charlie.

'That is a precious plant, more precious than gold; and all the things that may be desired, are not to be compared to it. Do you know the meaning of the word conscience?'

'Our teacher told us that *con* means with, and *sciens* knowing; and so, the word conscience means, to know with another, that other being God.'

'God has placed conscience in the heart of man to witness for Him, ever telling us when we do right and when we do wrong. We read of an evil conscience. What is that?'

'It is when conscience tells us that we have done wrong, and, that God is angry with us.'

'In Psalm xxxii. David describes what he suffered when conscience troubled him, and how he found *peace of conscience.* Read verses 3-5.' And Charlie read:—

'"When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me; my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin."'

'That is a remarkable description of the misery of a guilty conscience, and of the way to have it removed by confessing sin and receiving forgiveness. The beginning of the psalm describes the blessedness of *peace of conscience.* David's heart was sprinkled from an evil conscience, and so he had confidence towards God. When peace of conscience fills the soul, another plant often springs up. What is it?'

s *joy in the Holy Ghost*, that is next named in the

. wishes His people to rejoice in Him; and the Holy hews them the great blessings God has provided for hat their joy may be full. Justified by faith we have ith God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and rejoice in the glory of God. I think Alice knows some verses oy.' And little Alice repeated:—

Joy is a fruit that will not grow
In nature's barren soil;
All we can boast, till Christ we know,
Is vanity and toil.

But where the Lord has planted grace
And made His glories known,
There fruits of heavenly joy and peace
Are found, and there alone.

at blessing is next named as flowing from justification,

ease of grace comes next, mamma.'
ce there signifies the new life in the soul; the graces Holy Spirit. Wherever there is life, there must be . Love, peace, and joy, grow in the heart. Do you ber which parable Jesus spake to teach us how grace in rt increases or grows?'
t the one about the blade and the ear?'
t is the one. You will find it in Mark iv. 26-29.'
ve found the place,' said Charlie, and he read:—
) is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed e ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and ed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. e earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, ie ear, after that the full corn in the ear."'

'That is how the graces, planted by the Holy Spirit, grow, when watered continually. Humility is one of these graces. It was planted in the heart of the proud Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus, when he was converted; and, the older he grew, his humility increased the more. Soon after he became an apostle, he says, I am the least of the apostles, and am not meet to be called an apostle. Some years after this, he calls himself less than the least of all saints; and when about to receive the crown of glory, he calls himself the chief of sinners. It was the *increase of grace* which made him so very humble, while his labours for Christ were so great. Now we come to *perseverance therein to the end.* Do you know what that is, Charlie?'

'I think it means, that grace in the heart can never die.'

'Christ has promised that His people shall never perish. He says, My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. This is the decisive mark of Christ's own people, they endure to the end. Those who only follow Christ for a time, like the stony ground hearers, cannot be saved.'

'But, mamma, how can we be sure that we shall always follow Jesus?' asked Nellie.

'We must be always clinging to Jesus, and He will not suffer us to perish, and we must watch against sin. Archbishop Leighton says, "The grace of God in the heart of man is a tender plant in a strange unkindly soil, and therefore cannot well prosper and grow, without much care and pains, and that of a skilful hand, and which hath the art of cherishing it."'

'Supposing some one had given you a present of a tender greenhouse plant for your garden, what would you do with it, Nellie?'

'I would plant it beside the wall, where it would be

ered from the cold winds and get plenty of sunshine; and uld water it every day; and if the stem were drooping, I d prop it up with a bit wood, the way papa does. And ı the cold frosty days came, I would put it into a ırpot, and keep it in the house.'

f you took all that care, I think your plant would thrive y. This is the way you must watch over the tender ; of God's grace in your heart. You must take care, to er it from the chilling blasts of temptation, and keep it in the sunshine of God's love, and ask God to water it r moment with His Holy Spirit. If you do this, the er plant will become stronger and stronger, till it is ıplanted to the garden above.'

'Saviour, teach me how to pray;
Take my sinful heart away;
In the kingdom of Thy grace,
Give a little child a place.

Oh, supply my every want!
Feed the young and tender plant:
Day and night my keeper be,
Every moment watch round me.'

XXVI.

ASLEEP IN JESUS.

'FOR I AM IN A STRAIT BETWIXT TWO, HAVING A DESIRE TO DEPART, AND TO BE WITH CHRIST; WHICH IS FAR BETTER.'

37. *What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?*

The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection.

'YOU might sing "Asleep in Jesus," mamma,' said little Harry, as he climbed her knee.

'What makes you think of that hymn now, Harry?'

'I was thinking of the walk we had with papa yesterday, and of the stone he shewed us in the cemetery with a verse of that hymn on it; and papa told us that a cemetery means a sleeping place.'

'And do the good people who are buried there sleep in the grave, Harry?'

'Their bodies sleep in the grave, but their souls are in heaven.'

And little Alice added, 'papa shewed us another stone, which had on it the words, "With Christ, which is far better," and he told us that these words reminded us that the soul was with Jesus, while the body slept in the tomb.'

'And Jesus takes care of the bodies; even while sleeping in the grave they are *still united to Him.* Read Isaiah xxvi. 19,

and you will see what Jesus says of the bodies of His people.' And Charlie read:—

'"Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise."'

'Jesus lay in the tomb to make it the sleeping place of the bodies of all His people. "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with Him."'

'I can say the verse that is on the gravestone, mamma,' said little Alice, and she repeated:—

'Asleep in Jesus! O how sweet
To be for such a slumber meet;
In holy confidence to sing
That death has lost his venomed sting.'

When they had sung that sweet hymn, mamma asked the question, '*What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?*' And Charlie repeated:—

'*The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection.*'

'That answer names the two great blessings which Jesus bestows on the souls of His people when they die. What is the first named blessing?'

'*Made perfect in holiness.*'

'Whenever a sinner comes to Jesus, He begins to follow Him, and become like Him; but sin dwells in him as long as he is in the world. It is only when he dies that he is made pure as Christ is pure; then he *immediately passes to glory.* Can you tell me, which saying of Jesus on the cross teaches that when believers die, *their souls do immediately pass into glory?*'

'Jesus said to the thief on the cross, To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.'

'Yes, Charlie; and Paul says, Having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better. To be like Christ and to be with Christ, is heaven. Then what should be our chief desire now?'

'To be growing like Christ.'

'And we can grow like Christ only by having Christ in our hearts. Christ in us is the hope of glory, and to be with Christ is glory. To die is gain. We cannot imagine the blessedness of believers when they die.'

'In vain our fancy strives to paint
The moment after death;
The glories that surround the saint
When he resigns his breath.

Thus much (and this is all) we know
They are supremely blest;
Have done with sin, and care, and woe,
And with their Saviour rest.'

'But does death bring such joy to every one?'

'No, mamma; for it is only Christ's people who go to heaven.'

'Only they. To all others, death is the King of Terrors; but to believers, to die is gain. And who are *believers?*'

'Those who believe that Jesus is able and willing to save, and who trust Him, are *believers.*'

'And those who trust Christ, need have no fear of the dark river:—

Not one object of His care
Ever suffered shipwreck there.

A poor girl, who had learned to trust in Jesus, while lying ll in an infirmary, said one day to a kind friend who visited

her, "Now I feel more afraid to live than die, for fear I should grieve my dear Saviour. I've been such a sinful child; isn't He good to take my sins away! I do want to see Him, indeed I do."'

One Sabbath, while listening to the church bells, she said—'I should like to go to church once more; but it will be better to go up and be close to Jesus always.'

Another time, alluding to the story of the Young Cottager, which had been lent her, she said, 'I'm as happy as little Jane, and know what that means now, "Christ here, and Christ there."'

Shortly after, when her end was very near, looking up as if one was very near her, she said, 'Dear Saviour, come, come, and fetch me!'

Then her face lighted up with a heavenly glory, and she said, 'Nurse, make room for Him. The Lord Jesus is saying to me, Come! I do hear Him, and I am coming.' Yes, He was come, fulfilling His promise: 'I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.'

Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are;
While on His breast I lean my head
And breathe my life out sweetly there.

'Can you tell me now how it is that Jesus makes death, which is the fruit of sin, a blessing to His people?'

'It is because Jesus has taken away sin, which is the sting of death.'

'By dying on the cross, Christ abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light; and now, to His people, death is the very gate of heaven. Do you remember the story of the first Christian martyr?'

'That was Stephen. When he was dying, he saw heaven opened, and Jesus sitting at the right hand of God.'

'The prayers Stephen, offered in his last moments, shew us how very like Jesus he had become. He prayed for himself, and then for his murderers.'

'I remember Stephen's prayers, mamma,' said Nellie. 'He prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," and then he prayed for his murderers, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."'

'And then in the midst of the stones thrown at him by his cruel persecutors, the Lord Jesus received his spirit, and his body fell asleep in Him.'

'O never fear to cross the stream
Of death's dark rolling river,
Look up, there is a golden gleam,
And One that can deliver.
He doeth wonders in the dark,
By whom our steps are guided;
Before us moves His holy ark—
The waters are divided!

Across our path they cannot meet,
They cannot rush to seize us;
They parted at the holy feet—
The anointed feet of Jesus.
Thro' life, thro' death, we follow Him
In whom we have confided,
And, while we look, from brim to brim
The waters are divided.'

XXVII.

THAT DAY.

'HENCEFORTH THERE IS LAID UP FOR ME A CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, WHICH THE LORD, THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGE, SHALL GIVE ME AT THAT DAY.'

38. *What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the resurrection?*

At the resurrection, believers being raised up in glory, shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity.

'MAMMA, the text to-day was a very short one, just two words, THAT DAY; and the minister told us that whenever Paul spoke of *that day*, he meant the day of judgment. He called it *that day*, because he was always looking forward to it, always thinking of it.'

'And where is that short text, Nellie?'

'It is, in three places, in 2nd Timothy. In the first chapter, verse 12, Paul says, I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against *that day;* in verse 18 he prays, The Lord grant unto Him that he may find mercy of the Lord in *that day;* and in chapter iv. 8, Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at *that day*.'

'In all these passages Paul is speaking of the day of judgment, and looking forward to it joyfully. Why was he not afraid to think of standing before the judgment seat of Christ?'

'He was not afraid because the Judge was his friend; and he knew that he had been already justified by His blood.'

'That was the secret of his joy. A good man, when dying, being much tempted by the enemy, silenced him by saying, "I die wrapped in the merits of Jesus, and I shall lie down in the grave wrapped in the merits of Jesus, and I shall rise in the morning of the resurrection wrapped in the merits of Jesus." The answer you have been learning in the Catechism, names some of the blessings Paul looked for at that day. Let me hear you repeat it, Charlie.'

'*At the resurrection, believers being raised up in glory, shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity.*'

'These are great and precious blessings in store for Christ's people, at the resurrection, when they shall be *raised up in glory*. You know what was the most wonderful miracle which Jesus wrought on earth, excepting His own resurrection?'

'It was, when He raised Lazarus after he had been dead four days.'

'I like that story, mamma; you might read it to us,' said little Alice; and mamma read the touching narrative on to the words, 'He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him and let him go.' Lazarus was the third person whom Jesus raised from the dead while He was on earth. Who were the others?'

'Jairus' little daughter, and the widow of Nain's son.'

'Jesus raised these three persons from the dead, to show His power over death and the grave; and to assure us that, at the last day, all who are in their graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth.'



Raising of the Widow's Son

'But, mamma, how will the bodies which have mouldered to dust, and those which have been eaten up by fishes in the sea, rise again?' asked Charlie.

'We cannot tell how; but we know, that, even during life, our bodies are constantly being wasted and renewed, particle by particle, so that, several times during a lifetime, the whole body is entirely changed, and yet it is still the same person; and we may be certain, that what God has promised, He is able to perform. Paul answers the very question you have put, by pointing us to the seed decaying in the ground, and then springing up in life and beauty. Every spring we see a striking emblem of the resurrection. In winter, plants seem dead; and in spring, they rise again. So also is the resurrection of the dead. Read 1 Cor. xv. 42, and you will see the meaning of the words, *raised up in glory*.'

'It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power.'

'The resurrection body is made like Christ's glorious body. It can suffer and die no more. That glorious body will never be sick or feeble or weary, but be always the strong and vigorous servant of the soul. It will need no sleep to restore its energies, for there shall be no night there. Now you can tell me what blessings are bestowed on Christ's people, when they are raised up in glory?'

'They *shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment*.'

'Who will acknowledge them in that day?'

'The Lord Jesus Himself. He says, Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven.'

'Jesus will not be ashamed of His people in that day, but

will acknowledge them openly as His brethren. Surely, then, His people should not be ashamed to acknowledge Him now as their Saviour. At that day Christ's people shall be *acquitted*. What does that mean, Nellie?'

'I think it means justified, mamma.'

'Yes, the judge will at that day pronounce them innocent of every charge brought against them. The sinner is justified in the sight of God whenever he believes in Jesus; but it is at the day of judgment that he shall be *openly acquitted*, that is, declared righteous before the assembled world. And more than this, he will receive a great reward. What does the answer say of the reward?'

'It says, *made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity*.'

'*The full enjoying of God* is perfect bliss. David was looking forward to this great reward when he said, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness." Many a time he had said tearfully, my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God. It is those who thus thirst after righteousness who shall be filled. But we must never forget that it is only those who, by receiving Jesus, begin to enjoy God here, to whom the day of judgment will bring this great reward. Rev. vi. 15, 16, describes how the wicked shall feel in that day of joy to the believer. Read the verses, Charlie.'

'"And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondsman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.'

'How awful to think of the wrath of the Lamb, and of the dreadful words He will then say to His enemies. You know them, Alice.'

'He will say, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.'

'How very different from the joyous welcome His own people will then receive.'

'I know what Jesus will say to them, mamma. He will say, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world."'

'And then He will acknowledge every service they have ever done for Him, saying, Well done good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord. Dr. Doddridge tells us that one night he dreamed, that the day of judgment had come, and that he was in a large room alone. While waiting there, he observed that the walls all round were covered with pictures. On examining these, what was his surprise to discover that each one depicted some occurrence in his own life. Every kind deed he had ever done, was thus memorialized; but not a single error he had ever committed, was pictured there. Only his good deeds were remembered.'

Thus shall the great Judge openly acknowledge and acquit His own people in the day of judgment, and make them perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity.

'For ever with the Lord,
Amen, so let it be;
Life from the dead is in that word,
'Tis immortality.'

XXVIII.

DUTY.

'THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD WITH ALL THY HEART, AND WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY MIND.'

39. *What is the duty which God requireth of man?*
The duty which God requireth of man, is obedience to His revealed will.

40. *What did God at first reveal to man for the rule of his obedience?*
The rule which God at first revealed to man for his obedience, was the moral law.

41. *Where is the moral law summarily comprehended?*
The moral law is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments.

42. *What is the sum of the ten commandments?*
The sum of the ten commandments is, To love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind, and our neighbour as ourselves.

'MAMMA, what does *duty* mean?'

'Surely, Nellie, you know that whatever we ought to do, is our duty. The answer you are learning, tells you itself. *The duty which God requireth of man, is obedience to His revealed will.*'

'Yes, mamma, I know that obedience to God is our duty; but I do not know why obedience is called *duty*.'

'The word *duty* signifies what we *owe*—what is *due* from us to God and man. Read Rom. xiii. 7-10, and it will help you to understand it.' And Nellie read, 'Render therefore to all

es; tribute to whom tribute is *due;* custom to whom
; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. Owe
any thing, but to love one another.'
'ou remember what our sins are called in the Lord's
Charlie?'
ys, "Forgive us our *debts.*"'
sins are called *debts,* because obedience is what we
God. It is His due; and as we have not rendered it
we are in debt.'
at the meaning of—

"Jesus paid it all,
All the debt I owe"'?

ttle Alice.

Obedience to God's revealed will is the great
he ten thousand talents which we could never pay;
us paid this great debt, when He obeyed and suffered
oom.'
mamma, what is *revealed will?*'
eveal, signifies to make known, to show us something
s hidden or veiled before. The Bible is a *revelation*
)d, and is the only book from which we can learn His
But the Bible was not the first rule given to man.
ad no Bible. The next answer tells us of the *rule*
ve to man, when He created him. *What did God at*
eal to man for the rule of his obedience?'
rule which God at first revealed to man for his
e, was the moral law.'
it is the *moral law,* mamma?'
the law of duty; the law of right and wrong. It is
y law which was written in the hearts of our first
when God created them in His own image, and which

the holy angels in heaven obey. Do you know where we find the moral law expressed so shortly, that every one can easily commit the whole to memory?'

'In the ten commandments,' said Nellie. *The moral law is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments.*'

'Yes. The ten commandments contain the whole duty of man. Can you tell me when they were given by God?'

'It was when the Israelites were in the wilderness, at mount Sinai. God spake the commandments by a voice from heaven, and He wrote them with His own finger on two tables of stone.'

'Yes, Charlie. And at the same time God gave to Moses another law, called the *ceremonial* law. What is it about?'

'It is about the priests and the sacrifices, and the tabernacle and the Jewish rites.'

'Do you know why the *ceremonial* law was not given by a voice from heaven, and written by the finger of God, in the same way as the *moral* law?'

'Our teacher told us why, mamma. It was because the *ceremonial* law was only to be observed till the time of Christ, when it was done away; but the *moral* law was to be continued for ever.'

'That is the reason. The *ceremonial* law was for ever abolished, when Jesus died on the cross; but the *moral* law was given to us anew by Jesus. He summed up all the ten commandments in two great ones. Little Alice knows the two great commandments.'

'Yes, mamma, I can repeat them. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind—this is the first and great commandment; and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."'

'Yes. Jesus said, "On those two commandments, hang all the law and the prophets." If we obey these two commandments, we will obey all the ten, and all the other precepts in the Bible. Paul summed up the whole in one word.'

'I know the word, mamma,' said Charlie. 'It is LOVE.'

'Yes. LOVE is the fulfilling of the law. To love God, and to love one another, is the whole duty of man. Can you tell me another way in which Jesus honoured the moral law, besides giving it to man anew?'

'He obeyed it Himself, and He died for our sins.'

'That was how Jesus magnified the law and made it honourable. He died on the cross because we had broken God's holy commandments; and now He says to us, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." We shall read the parable which teaches us that those whose sins are forgiven, love and obey Him. Which parable is it?'

'I think it is the one about the two debtors.'

'That is the one. You will find the story in Luke vii. 37-50.' And they read the touching narrative of the woman whose sins were forgiven, therefore she loved much.

'But, mamma, there are some passages which speak of the law as if it was the very opposite of the gospel. One verse says that believers are dead to the law. What does that mean?' asked Nellie.

'You know that the law is love, the same in character as the gospel, but we have all broken it. We are sinners, and therefore we can never be saved by obeying the law. We must look to Jesus, for life, for salvation, and then keep His commandments. If we do this, we shall learn that both the law and the gospel reflect the likeness of God, for God is love. Paul tells us what is the first use of the law to us. Do you know what he says it did for him?'

'It taught him that he was a sinner, and made him glad to come to Jesus. He says, "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ."'

'That is the first use of the commandments. The holy law shows us how great sinners we are, that we may flee to Jesus. It is an awful mistake to think we are able to save ourselves by keeping the law, for it can only condemn us. Jesus alone can save. And when He saves a sinner, He writes God's law on his heart.'

Then mamma read to the children, from 'The Pilgrim's Progress,' the story of Worldly-wiseman persuading Christian to seek relief from his burden in the town of Morality. And how, when he came to mount Sinai, instead of getting ease, his burden grew heavier and heavier; and flashes of fire from the hill made him fear and tremble, and wish that he had not followed Worldly-wiseman's advice. And then, how Evangelist came to his help, when he did not know what to do; and after showing him his great sin in turning aside, helped him into the right way, and how, his burden fell off, when he came to the cross of Jesus.

'In vain we ask God's righteous law
To justify us now,
Since to convince, and to condemn,
Is all the law can do.

Jesus, how glorious is Thy grace
When in Thy name we trust,
Our faith receives a righteousness
That makes the sinner just.'

XXIX.

NOT YOUR OWN.

'I AM THE LORD THY GOD, WHICH HAVE BROUGHT THEE OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT, OUT OF THE HOUSE OF BONDAGE.'

43. *What is the preface to the ten commandments?*

The preface to the ten commandments is in these words, *I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*

44. *What doth the preface to the ten commandments teach us?*

The preface to the ten commandments teacheth us, That because God is the Lord, and our God, and Redeemer, therefore we are bound to keep all His commandments.

'I CAN say the verse in my text book, mamma,' said little Alice; it is, 'Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.'

'And do you know the meaning of these words?'

'I know what the Passover was, mamma. It was the night when the Lord killed the first-born in every house of the Egyptians, and passed over the houses of the Israelites, because the blood of a lamb was sprinkled on the door-posts.'

'Not one of the Israelites was killed, for the Lord had promised, "When I see the blood, I will *pass over* you," and the same night He brought them out of Egypt. When they were in Canaan, they were commanded to keep the feast of the Passover every year. Do you know why, Nellie?'

'The Israelites were commanded to observe the Passover to keep them in remembrance of their slavery in Egypt, and of how wonderfully God had brought them out.'

'The feast of the Passover was a memorial of the great deliverance God wrought for Israel; and it was observed that the Israelites might never forget God's goodness, but tell of it to their children. Read Exodus xii. 26, 27, and you will there see that God wishes children to be told of His wonderful works.'

'"And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses."'

'I think Charlie can tell us why Christ is called our Passover.'

'It is because the Paschal Lamb was a type of Christ, the Lamb of God. The minister made it quite plain to us, mamma. He said that the Israelites' bondage in Egypt was a type of our state by nature. We are slaves of Satan, and deserve to die for our sins; but if sprinkled with the blood of the Lamb, God will look upon the blood and pass over our iniquity, and bring us out of the slavery of sin, and make us His own people.'

'The bondage of sin is far worse than Egyptian bondage, and to be saved from it a far greater deliverance than being brought out of Egypt. And since God has done this great work for us, what must we do for Him? How can we shew Him our gratitude?'

'We must keep His commandments. Mr — told us that is why God spoke the words, "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage," before giving the commandments at Sinai.'

'You know what the Catechism says about these words, Nellie. *What doth the preface to the ten commandments teach us?*'

'*The preface to the ten commandments teacheth us, that because God is the Lord, and our God, and Redeemer, therefore we are bound to keep all His commandments.*'

'That answer points out three reasons for keeping the commandments, given in the words, "I am the Lord thy God, &c." Can you name them, Charlie, and tell me in which words of the preface each reason is found?'

'The three reasons are, *because God is the Lord, and our God, and Redeemer.* The first reason is in the words, "I am the Lord;" the second in the words, "thy God;" and then, "which brought thee out of the land of Egypt," means, our Redeemer, I think.'

'Quite right, Charlie. Those whom Christ has redeemed by His precious blood, are doubly bound to keep His commandments. Every one is bound to obey God, because *He is the Lord;* but if He is *our God and Redeemer*, we are under deeper obligations to keep His commandments. We are not our own, but bought with a price. I remember a story which will help you to understand this.'

'Are you going to tell us a story, mamma?' asked little Alice. 'That will be nice.'

'The story is about a poor slave woman. She was seen by a kind-hearted gentleman, who pitied her sad condition so much, that he gave a large sum of money to purchase her freedom. When told that she was free, she seemed quite bewildered, and for a time could not understand what had been done for her. At length the fact dawned upon her, that she really was no longer a slave, but at liberty to go where she pleased, and to do what she pleased, and she was told to whom she owed her freedom.

'At once she resolved to serve that kind friend as long as she lived; and when any one asked her why she would not consent to leave him, she always replied, "He redeemed me! he redeemed me!"'

'That story is like the hymn which says—

"Think, O think how much we owe Him,
O how He loves!
With His precious blood He bought us,
In the wilderness He sought us,
To His fold He safely brought us,
O how He loves!"'

'Yes, Nellie. That is a beautiful verse. When we think of all that Jesus has done for us, we, like the poor slave, delight to serve Him, because He has redeemed us.'

'But, mamma,' added Charlie, 'I have heard ministers say there was no use in our trying to keep the commandments, because we can never keep them perfectly. Why did they say so, mamma?'

'I think, Charlie, you are only telling me a part of what you have heard said. Probably the speakers were warning their hearers against seeking salvation by their own works, and telling them that they must come to Jesus first, and then obey Him. God did not bring Israel out of Egypt because they had kept His commandments. He brought them out of Egypt first, and then bade them keep His commandments.'

'I see the meaning of it now.'

'Long ago a little Jewish boy was born in the land of Palestine. He was early instructed in the Scriptures, and grew up obedient to his parents, truthful, loving, and beloved. He had everything that this world can give to make him happy; but there was one thought which sometimes forced itself upon him, and troubled him. He knew that some day

he must die, and he was not sure what would become of him then. He hoped to win eternal life by keeping the commandments, but this hope did not give him peace. One day he heard that a great teacher was in the part of the country where he lived, and he thought he would ask Him what he should do. He ran to Him, and kneeling to Him said, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"'

'I know that story, mamma,' said Charlie. 'It is in the Bible, I can find it.'

'Since you have found where the story is, I think we shall read it,' and they read Mark x. 17-31. When they came to the 20th verse, Nellie asked, 'Why did the young man say that he had kept all the commandments, when no one can do so?'

'The young man was honest and sincere, but he did not know that the commandment is exceeding broad, reaching to the thoughts of the heart; and it was to teach him this, and to shew him that he was a sinner, that Jesus said to him, "Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, &c." And did he obey this command?'

'No; the next verse says, "And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved; for he had great possessions."'

'Mamma,' said little Alice, 'was that good young man whom Jesus loved not saved?'

'He was not saved then, and we do not know whether he afterwards repented or not. If he had known what a precious Saviour Jesus is, he would gladly have parted with his riches, and have followed Him. It is those who receive Christ into their hearts, that are enabled to keep His commandments.'

XXX.

NO OTHER GODS.

'THOU SHALT HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME. THOU SHALT WORSHIP THE LORD THY GOD, AND HIM ONLY SHALT THOU SERVE.'

45. *Which is the first commandment?*

The first commandment is, Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.

46. *What is required in the first commandment?*

The first commandment requireth us to know and acknowledge God to be the only true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify Him accordingly.

47. *What is forbidden in the first commandment?*

The first commandment forbiddeth the denying, or not worshipping and glorifying the true God, as God, and our God; and the giving of that worship and glory to any other, which is due to Him alone.

48. *What are we specially taught by these words* [before me] *in the first commandment?*

These words [*before me*] in the first commandment teach us, That God, who seeth all things, taketh notice of, and is much displeased with, the sin of having any other god.

'MAMMA, why are there so many questions in the Catechism about each commandment? *What is required?* and *What is forbidden?* comes after every one, and to some of them other questions are added.'

'All these questions and answers are given to help you to understand the commandments. Every commandment enjoins some duty, and warns against some sin; and these questions in the Catechism unfold to us what is the duty required, and

what is the sin forbidden by each commandment. You will understand this better when we have gone over the answers on the first commandment. Little Alice can repeat it.'

'The first commandment is, *Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.*'

'Now tell me, Alice, what this commandment bids us do?'

'It does not bid us do anything, mamma; it only tells us not to worship idols like the heathen.'

'The first commandment tells us far more than that, Alice. It says, "Thou shalt have no *other* gods," which implies that we are to have the One True God for our God. Every human heart needs a God to love and trust and obey. "I am the Lord thy God," are the words immediately before the commandments. Charlie, what does the Catechism tell us about the duty required in the first commandment?'

'*To know and acknowledge God to be the only true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify Him accordingly.*'

'That is what is implied in having *no other gods;* but how can we know the only true God, and have Him for our God?'

'We must believe on Jesus.'

'That is our first duty. "This is His commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ." How did Jesus answer those who asked Him, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" Read John vi. 29.'

'Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.'

'The first commandment is, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, for no man cometh unto the Father but by Him. Every one who has not come to Jesus, is an idolater.'

'I thought that an idolater meant a heathen, one who worships idols; and, mamma, surely nobody in this country worships idols.'

'You are sadly mistaken, Charlie, if you think that nobody in this country worships idols. What do you think an idol is?'

'An idol is a heathen god, mamma. We saw some of the Hindoo idols at the missionary meeting. They were ugly things made of wood, not able to do anything, and yet the heathen pray to them.'

'These are the idols those commonly called idolaters worship, and it is very sad to think of them doing so; but there are other idols worshipped in our own land. Whatever we love most, is our god; and if we love any thing more than God, we are idolaters. An idol in his heart made the young man whom Jesus commanded to sell all and follow Him, go away sorrowful. What was his idol?'

'Was it his riches, mamma?'

'Yes, Charlie; he loved his riches more than he loved Jesus. He went away grieved, for he had great possessions. Having wealth, or desiring to have it, is the idol which keeps Christ out of the hearts of thousands. Paul tells us that the love of money is the root of all evil, and that covetousness is idolatry. There is another idol which keeps many of the young away from Christ. It is called "Pleasure."'

'Is it wrong, mamma, to seek pleasure?'

'It is wrong to set our hearts on such pleasures as cannot last, and to allow these to make us put off coming to Christ. True pleasure is found in Him, and in Him alone.'

'Do you ask me for pleasure? then lean on His breast,
For there the sin-burdened and weary find rest.'

'Tell me, Nellie, in the words you have been learning, what the first commandment forbids?'

'The denying, or not worshipping and glorifying the true God, as God, and our God; and the giving of that worship and glory to any other, which is due to Him alone.'



'That answer points out to us clearly the sins against which we are warned in the commandment, "Thou shalt have no

other gods before Me." It tells us what we owe to God, and must not render to any but Him. What is it, Nellie, that is due to God alone?'

'*Worship and glory.*'

'Do you remember what Daniel did when he was commanded not to worship God for thirty days?'

'I know, mamma,' said little Alice, 'He prayed to God three times a day, and he was put into the den of lions for praying.'

'Why did Daniel not pray to God in a room, where no one could see him?' asked Charlie.

'Daniel wished the heathen to see that he could not *deny*, or cease from *worshipping and glorifying the true God.* He felt that it would be wrong even to seem to do so. Daniel loved his God more than he loved his life, and God honoured him for so boldly confessing Him before men.'

'God sent His angel to shut the lions' mouths, that they could not hurt him.'

'And you remember what Daniel's companions did when they were commanded to give the worship and glory, due to God alone, to a golden image?'

'They would not do it, and they were cast into a fiery furnace, but Jesus was with them in the fire.'

'Jesus is always with His people when they are keeping His commandments. He that loseth his life for His sake, shall keep it unto life eternal. And He has left us His own example of obedience, even when tempted as we are. Satan tried to make Him break the first commandment, when he offered Him all the kingdoms of the world, if He would fall down and worship him; and you know what Jesus said?'

'Jesus said, "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."'

'That is how we must act, when tempted to love any thing

more than God. I think, Alice, you can tell me the meaning of the first commandment better now.'

'Does it just mean that we should love Jesus best of all?'

'That is what it commands. Jesus gave us the first commandment anew, when he said, "He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me;" and we need a new heart and a right spirit to enable us to obey it.'

'The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be;
Help me to tear it from Thy throne,
And worship only Thee.'

'We must think, too, of the poor heathen who are taught from infancy to pray to gods of wood and stone.'

'Papa was reading to us this morning about little Henry and his bearer, mamma,' said Alice. 'Little Henry's bearer taught him to pray to the Hindoo gods, and he did not know about the true God, or about Jesus, till he was six years old. Then a good lady came from England, and she loved little Henry, and was very sorry for him, and told him about Jesus, and taught him to read, and gave him a Bible.'

'And what became of little Henry after the kind lady left him. Did he begin again to worship idols?'

'O no, mamma. Little Henry loved Jesus, and he would not worship any one but God, and he was always trying to get Boosa,—that was what he called his bearer,—to love Jesus too. But Boosa always prayed to his own gods, till little Henry was dying; and then he promised not to pray to them any more, and he kept his promise.'

'Little Henry first turned away from idols himself, and then he tried to bring his friend to Jesus. He had learned that "This is life eternal to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent."'

XXXI.

NO GRAVEN IMAGES.

'THOU SHALT NOT MAKE UNTO THEE ANY GRAVEN IMAGE, OR ANY LIKENESS OF ANY THING, &c.'

49. *Which is the second commandment?*

The second commandment is, Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments.

50. *What is required in the second commandment?*

The second commandment requireth the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath appointed in His word.

51. *What is forbidden in the second commandment?*

The second commandment forbiddeth the worshipping of God by images, or any other way not appointed in His word.

52. *What are the reasons annexed to the second commandment?*

The reasons annexed to the second commandment are, God's sovereignty over us, His propriety in us, and the zeal He hath to His own worship.

'MAMMA, what is the difference between the second commandment and the first?' asked Nellie, when she had repeated the second commandment.

'The first commandment teaches us to worship God only; and the second commandment refers to the manner in which we ought to worship God, forbidding the use of images in His worship.'

'But, mamma, do people who worship the true God ever use images?'

'Many who profess to worship the true God use images of saints, and say that these aid their devotions. In Roman Catholic countries, images of the Virgin Mary and of other saints are constantly used; and yet those who bow down to them think they are worshipping the true God.'

'Do they not know that God has forbidden the use of images in His worship?'

'Many of them do not know, because they have never searched the Scriptures for themselves. Whenever any of them begin to study the Bible—carefully and prayerfully—they find out the errors of their church. Do you remember that Aaron displeased God by making a golden calf for the Israelites to use in His worship?'

'Did the Israelites mean to worship God by the golden calf?'

'They intended to worship God. Read Exodus xxxii. 5, Charlie.'

'"And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To-morrow is a feast to the Lord."'

'This narrative shews us how very displeasing it is to God to have any graven image used in His worship. *What is forbidden in the second commandment?*'

'*The second commandment forbiddeth the worshipping of God by images, or any other way not appointed in His word.*'

'Jesus reproved the Pharisees for breaking this commandment, when He said: In vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.'

'Besides warning us against a sin, the second commandment requires of us a duty. What is it, Nellie?'

'*The second commandment requireth the receiving, observing,*

and keeping pure and entire all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath appointed in His word.'

'When Jesus was about to ascend to heaven, He gave this commandment anew to His disciples. I think, Charlie, you can repeat the words in which He did so.'

'Jesus said, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded."'

'These words shew us that we must seek direction from Christ Himself regarding the religious worship and ordinances we should observe. What did Jesus tell the woman of Samaria, when she asked about the place where God should be worshipped?'

'He said that the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.'

'It is not the place where we worship, but the sincere heart that God regards; for God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship in spirit and in truth.'

'What are *ordinances?*' asked Charlie.

'The preaching of the Word is an ordinance; baptism and the Lord's supper are ordinances. We have received these ordinances from Christ, and it is our duty to observe them as appointed in His word.'

'What is *keeping them pure and entire?*

'That is, that we are to try every thing by the Word of God. This is how we may know whether our teachers are men sent by God or not. Read what Paul says about this in Gal. i. 8, 9.'

'"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."'

'And in the next verse Paul repeats almost the same words, to shew us how very careful we should be to follow only those teachers who have been taught by Christ Himself. Do you know how Luther discovered that the preachers of his time had not been sent from God, but were preaching another gospel?'

'He found a Bible in the monastery, and he read it. I think that was how he knew.'

'That was it. The Spirit of God taught Luther to understand the Scriptures, and there he learned that none can forgive sins but God only, and that there is no other name but the name Jesus Christ, whereby we must be saved. And what did Luther do then?'

'He told all the people that they should not confess their sins to the priests, nor buy indulgences, but go to Jesus Himself, and He would forgive all their sins without money and without price. And then he translated the Bible into German, to let all the people read it for themselves. And he wrote hymns for them too, beautiful hymns about Jesus.'

'Yes, Luther spent his life in seeking to restore to Germany the pure Word and worship of God, and in protesting against the errors of Rome. The Reformers in our own land followed his example, and their zeal in denouncing priestcraft and image worship, cost many of them their lives.'

'Was it for obeying the second commandment that Patrick Hamilton and George Wishart were burned to death, mamma?' asked little Alice.

'Yes, dear; these, and many others in our own land, and in France and Germany, and Spain and Italy, gave their lives, rather than consent to worship God in a way forbidden in His Word.'

'We have another question yet, mamma,' said Charlie, 'about *the reasons annexed to the second commandment.* I don't know what that means.'

'*Annexed* signifies added. What three reasons why we should keep this commandment are here given?'

'*God's sovereignty over us, His propriety in us, and the zeal He hath to His own worship.*'

'Can you tell me in which words of the commandment these reasons are found?'

'It must be at the end, and the words are, *For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments.*'

'These words both warn us against breaking this commandment, and encourage us to keep it; and they shew us what a merciful God the Lord is; for while He punishes iniquity to the third and fourth generation, He shews mercy to thousands of generations of them that love Him. Now tell me, Nellie, how can we be sure that we are obeying this commandment?'

'We must read the Bible very carefully, to learn what Christ has commanded, that we may know who are the teachers He has sent.'

'And we must do His will, as well as learn His Word, for Jesus says, "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God;" and "Ye do err not knowing the Scriptures."'

'Mamma,' said Charlie, 'we always hear a good minister, and we never pray to the Virgin Mary, or to saints, nor confess to priests; surely *we* do not break the second commandment.'

'You forget, Charlie, that the commandment is exceeding broad. We ought to be very thankful that we hear the Word preached faithfully, and that we have been taught to worship God through Christ alone; but do we always worship in spirit and in truth? Do we never draw near to God with our lips, while our hearts are far from Him?'

'GOD IS A SPIRIT: AND THEY THAT WORSHIP HIM, MUST WORSHIP HIM IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH.'

'Lord, when we bend before Thy throne,
And our confessions pour,
Teach us to feel the sins we own,
And hate what we deplore.

Our broken spirits, pitying, see,
And penitence impart;
Then let a kindling glance from Thee
Beam hope upon the heart.

When our responsive tongues essay
Their grateful hymns to raise,
Grant that our souls may join the lay,
And mount to Thee in praise.

When we disclose our wants in prayer,
May we our wills resign;
And not a thought our bosoms share,
That is not wholly Thine.

Let faith each meek petition fill,
And waft it to the skies;
And teach our hearts, 'tis goodness still
That grants it, or denies.'

XXXII.

HALLOWED BE THY NAME.

'THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD THY GOD IN VAIN: FOR THE LORD WILL NOT HOLD HIM GUILTLESS THAT TAKETH HIS NAME IN VAIN.'

53. *Which is the third commandment?*

The third commandment is, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.

54. *What is required in the third commandment?*

The third commandment requireth the holy and reverent use of God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, word, and works.

55. *What is forbidden in the third commandment?*

The third commandment forbiddeth all profaning or abusing of any thing whereby God maketh Himself known.

56. *What is the reason annexed to the third commandment?*

The reason annexed to the third commandment is, That however the breakers of this commandment may escape punishment from men, yet the Lord our God will not suffer them to escape His righteous judgment.

'I HAVE learned the third commandment, mamma,' said little Alice; and she repeated the words, 'Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.'

'Do you know what taking God's name in vain is, Alice?'

'Papa told me that it means speaking about God, when we are not thinking of Him. He says that to say our prayer very

fast, without thinking of what we pray for, is taking God's name in vain.'

'I thought taking God's name in vain meant swearing, mamma,' said Charlie.

'To swear is to take God's name in vain in a very dreadful manner; but we may break this commmandment many a time though we never swear. I hope none of you will ever be guilty of that awful sin. Read Mat. v. 34-37, and you will see how Jesus warns us to beware of using any oath.'

'"But I say unto you, Swear not at all: neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: nor by the earth; for it is His footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil."'

'These words of Jesus teach us that, in conversation, our word, our yes or no, is enough, without any stronger expressions. The apostle James writes: "Above all things, my brethren, swear not; neither by heaven, neither by earth, neither by any other oath," &c.' (James v. 12.)

'Mamma, is it wrong to say, "As sure's I'm living?"'

'All such expressions are wrong, and should be carefully avoided. Let your yes and no be enough.'

'But, mamma, people sometimes need to swear,' Nellie remarked.

'There are solemn occasions when it is our duty to swear. Then we do not take God's name in vain, but hallow it. The command, "Swear not at all," forbids the use of oaths in common conversation, and does not refer to those occasions when an oath is required of us. Read Isaiah xlv. 23, Charlie.'

'"I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear."'

'That verse points out the duty of solemnly professing that we are the Lord's, of swearing by His name. That is the holy and reverent use of God's name required by this commandment.'

The third commandment requireth the holy and reverent use of God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, word and works.

'You can tell me some of God's *names*.'

'The Lord is one, Jehovah is another,' said Charlie.

'Jesus is the name I like best, mamma,' added little Alice.

'And what are some of Jesus *titles?*'

'King of kings, and Lord of lords.'

What are His *attributes*, mamma?'

'That He is infinite, eternal, unchangeable, holiness, wisdom, power, &c. And you know what are His *ordinances?*'

'Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances.'

'Yes, Charlie; and public worship and secret prayer are *ordinances*, and should be observed with reverence. God's *word* should be read, with reverence, carefully and prayerfully. The Jews so reverenced the Scriptures, that if, in transcribing a copy, they made one mistake, they would begin it all over again; and thus God's word was preserved to us pure and entire. And what are God's *works* which we are to reverence?'

'God's works are the things He has made, and the things He does.'

'God made the earth and all things; and it is He who sends rain and sunshine, storm and calm, and yet people often fret because it is wet or cold. Is this to reverence God's works, do you think?'

'O, mamma, is it a sin to grumble because it is wet, and we can't get out to play?' asked Charlie.

'Only remember who sends the rain, and you will be able to answer that question for yourself.'

'I never thought before that it was a sin to grumble about the weather.'

'We often forget when we grumble about anything God sends, that we are murmuring against God Himself, and that God hears our murmurings. (Exodus xvi. 8, 9.) Reverence is the duty taught us in the third commandment; and that we may never forget this duty, Jesus teaches us to pray, "Hallowed be Thy name."'

'That is the first petition of the Lord's Prayer.'

'Yes, Charlie; and if we hallow God's name, we can never take it in vain. This prayer forbids all that is forbidden in the third commandment. What is there forbidden, Charlie?'

'*The third commandment forbiddeth all profaning or abusing of any thing whereby God maketh Himself known.*'

'Mamma, Mr— told us in his sermon to-day, that God was making Himself known at this very time by bringing a great many people to Jesus, and that now Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.'

'Yes, a revival is a wonderful work of God; and to speak slightingly of such a work, is to profane God's holy name. When Jesus is passing by, we should all most earnestly seek a blessing.'

'There is a reason annexed to the third commandment. What is it, Charlie?'

'*That however the breakers of this commandment may escape punishment from men, yet the Lord our God will not suffer them to escape His righteous judgment.*'

'There are many instances of terrible judgment befalling those who take God's name in vain. One summer, a lady and gentleman set off on ponies for an excursion from Margate to

Ramsgate, accompanied by two lads, William about seventeen, and George about thirteen years of age. William greatly distressed his companion by swearing at the ponies for moving so slowly. When the party had only proceeded one mile, they were overtaken by a dreadful thunderstorm, which obliged the lady and gentleman to seek shelter in a neighbouring cottage, and the lads placed themselves against a wall for protection. George was much agitated, and trembled exceedingly, but William upbraided him as a coward, and, with a terrible oath, exclaimed that he was resolved to push forward to Ramsgate in spite of it. That moment a terrible flash of lightning came down, burnt his clothes, and struck him dead on the spot.'

'The place is now marked with this inscription, "Reader, prepare thou for eternity. A boy was struck dead here when in the act of swearing."'

'That was awful, mamma,' said Nellie.

'Very awful. It is a dreadful thing not to Hallow this glorious and fearful name, "The Lord thy God." Those who love Jesus, cannot bear to hear His name taken in vain. A little girl who loved Jesus, hearing a man swear, went to him saying, "Please do not call God names, for He is my Father." When a Mahommedan, who was conversing with Henry Martyn, spoke irreverently of the Lord Jesus, tears filled the eyes of the good missionary; and when asked why he wept, he replied, "You have hurt my head."'

'LET US HAVE GRACE, WHEREBY WE MAY SERVE GOD ACCEPTABLY WITH REVERENCE AND GODLY FEAR.'

XXXIII.

THE LORD'S DAY.

'REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY, TO KEEP IT HOLY.'

57. *Which is the fourth commandment?*

The fourth commandment is, Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

58. *What is required in the fourth commandment?*

The fourth commandment requireth the keeping holy to God such set times as He hath appointed in His word; expressly one whole day in seven, to be a holy Sabbath to Himself.

59. *Which day of the seven hath God appointed to be the weekly Sabbath?*

From the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly Sabbath; and the first day of the week ever since, to continue to the end of the world, which is the Christian Sabbath.

'WILL you listen to this story, mamma?' said Charlie, as he looked up from the book he was reading.

'O yes. I will be very glad to hear what interests you so much. What is the story?'

And Charlie read the following narrative:—

'A farmer said, "I defy your Christian Sabbath; I will raise a Sunday crop." So he went to work and ploughed the ground on Sabbath, and harrowed it on Sabbath, and he

planted corn on Sabbath, and he reaped the corn on Sabbath, and he gathered it into the barn on Sabbath. "There," he said, "I have proved to you that all this idea about a fatality accompanying Sabbath work is a perfect sham. My crop is gathered, and all is well." Before many weeks had passed, the Lord struck that barn with His lightnings, and away went the Sabbath crop.'

'That is a very striking story. It shews us what a vain thing it is to try to rob God of the day which He has set apart for His own worship. Those who do so, cannot enjoy His blessing during the week. Which commandment requires us to keep holy the Sabbath day?'

'It is the fourth commandment. This is it: *Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.*'

'That is a very long commandment, mamma,' said little Alice; 'I could not learn it all.'

'But you know the first part of it.' And the child repeated the words: 'REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY TO KEEP IT HOLY.'

'That is the commandment. All that follows, is added to explain these words.'

'I know the meaning of the name Sabbath,' said Nellie. 'It is rest.'

'Yes. The name Sabbath is a very beautiful one. It commemorates God resting from His work of creation; Jesus *resting from* His work of redemption; and the day of rest is

an emblem of the rest above. The name Sabbath teaches us to rest from toil on that day; and what does the name Lord's day tell us?'

'It reminds us that Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week.' My hymn says:—

'This is the day that Jesus rose
So early from the dead;
Why should I keep my eyelids closed,
Or waste my hours in bed?'

'Jesus met with His disciples on that evening when they were assembled together, and blessed them; and again He met with them when assembled on the next first day of the week; and a few weeks afterwards on the day of Pentecost. You remember what a wonderful blessing He bestowed on them.'

'Was the day of Pentecost on Sabbath?'

'It was on the Lord's day, the first day of the week. Read Lev. xxiii. 15, 16, and you will see how we know this.'

'"And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave-offering; seven Sabbaths shall be complete: even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall ye number fifty days, &c."'

'The sheaf of the first-fruits was offered to the Lord on the day that Jesus rose from the dead, and seven Jewish Sabbaths passed before the day of Pentecost. On that memorable day the Holy Spirit descended, and three thousand converts were the first-fruits offered to the Lord. Thus the Lord blessed the Christian Sabbath, and hallowed it. Now tell me, Charlie, *What is required in the fourth commandment?*'

'*The fourth commandment requireth the* keeping holy to God

such set times as He hath appointed in His word; expressly one whole day in seven, to be a holy Sabbath to Himself.'

'Jesus tells us that the Sabbath was made for man. It is the Lord's day, and it is the Lord's gift to us. God gave this blessed day to man, that he might rest from toil and attend to the things of eternity. But for the day of rest, many would never have time to prepare for heaven. We cannot be too thankful for our Sabbaths.'

'Why are there so many questions in the Catechism about the fourth commandment, mamma?'

'I suppose it is because the good men who wrote the Catechism knew that if the young were trained to keep the Lord's day aright, they would keep all the other commandments. Those who honour the Sabbath, and delight in learning God's will on that day, are careful to serve Him faithfully during the week. God has promised His blessing to those who keep the Sabbath.'

'I can repeat a passage about the Sabbath, mamma,' said Nellie: 'If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, &c.' Isaiah lviii. 13, 14.

'These verses describe what it is to keep the Sabbath holy, and promise special blessings to those who so keep it.'

'But, mamma, I once heard a gentleman say that Christians should make every day a Sabbath.'

'I fear those who speak so do not know the sinfulness of their own hearts, or they would feel that they needed the seventh day's rest from worldly toil and care, to enable them *to serve God* on any day. In a sense all the commandments



On the Lord's Day.

hang on the fourth; for Sabbath hours are given us to gather strength and wisdom to fight the battle of life during the week.'

'I like the Sabbath day, mamma,' said little Alice, 'because you and papa have time to tell us stories, and shew us pictures, and sing hymns.'

'Were it not for the Lord's day, I fear we would find little time to teach you as we ought. I shall read you a German parable, and you shall tell me what it means. "A man with his family started to the land of his fathers. They travelled six parasangs (each parasang is four miles). At the close of the sixth parasang, there was a beautiful tent spread with all kinds of refreshments. They stopped and were refreshed; and rested a day, and then passed on. And having travelled six more parasangs, lo! they came to another tent in the desert, richly supplied with provisions, and they ate and were refreshed. They rested a day, and started on again; and at the end of six more parasangs, what was their surprise to find a third table. So it was all the way."'

'I know what that means, mamma,' said Nellie. 'We are the travellers in the desert, and the Sabbath is the tent where we rest and get refreshment.'

'That is it. The Lord's day is the glorious tent of Christian rest and refreshment at the close of every six days' travelling in the desert of this world.'

'O may we love this blessed day,
The best of all the seven.'

XXXIV.

THE LORD'S DAY.

'UPON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK, WHEN THE DISCIPLES CAME TOGETHER TO BREAK BREAD, PAUL PREACHED UNTO THEM.'

60. *How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?*

The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days; and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy.

61. *What is forbidden in the fourth commandment?*

The fourth commandment forbiddeth the omission or careless performance of the duties required, and the profaning the day by idleness, or doing that which is in itself sinful, or by unnecessary thoughts, words, or works, about our worldly employments or recreations.

62. *What are the reasons annexed to the fourth commandment?*

The reasons annexed to the fourth commandment are, God's allowing us six days of the week for our own employments, His challenging a special propriety in the seventh, His own example, and His blessing the Sabbath day.

'WHAT are you thinking about, Charlie, dear?' said the kind mother, as she observed the thoughtful countenance of her usually bright, happy little boy.'

'I was thinking about what a boy in our school said to me on Friday. He told me that he was going to get a sail in a steamboat to-day; and when I told him that it was very wicked to travel in trains or steamers on the Lord's day, he said there was no harm in it, because the Sabbath was only

intended for the Jews. He said that his papa had told him so, and that it was done away with when Jesus came, just like the Jewish sacrifices.'

'I am very sorry to hear that any boy in school with you should talk so. But what did you say to him, Charlie?'

'I said I was quite sure that *my* papa did not believe that, and that *he* would not go any excursion on Sabbath, because he says it is a great sin to make people work at their ordinary employments on that holy day.'

'But, mamma, though I know that what papa says is right, I do not know how we can prove from the Bible that the Sabbath was not done away with like the Jewish sacrifices. I would like to learn how we can know this.'

'I will try to show you that, and I think Nellie could help you to find it out. She knows how we can be sure that the Sabbath was made for all mankind as well as for the Jews.'

'Yes, mamma; I know that the Sabbath could not be made only for the Jews, for there were no Jews in the world when "God blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it." It was on the very first day after Adam and Eve were created, when they dwelt with God holy and happy.'

'Quite right, Nellie. The time when the Sabbath was instituted, shows clearly that its holy rest was designed for the good of all mankind. The Lord Jesus Himself says, "The Sabbath was made for man."'

'But, mamma, sacrifices were offered almost from the beginning; and yet they were done away.'

'That is quite true. Sacrifices were appointed when sin entered into the world, to teach man that sin deserves death, and to point to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. And you know why they were for ever done away.'

'O, yes; it was because Christ Jesus had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever. The sacrifices offered before were only types of His one great sacrifice. Is the Sabbath a type, mamma?'

'The Sabbath is not a type of Christ, but it is often looked upon as a beautiful type or emblem of heaven. Its holy rest and blessed employments are a shadow of the perfect rest and joyful worship of the heavenly world—

"Day of all the week the best,
Emblem of eternal rest."'

'If the Sabbath is a type of heaven, when do you think it will be done away, Charlie?'

'I think it will only be when we get to heaven, mamma; for then the everlasting Sabbath will have come.'

'And can you tell me where we find the command to keep the Sabbath holy? Is it only among the precepts concerning Jewish rites and ceremonies given by Moses?'

'O no, mamma; it is the fourth commandment—one of the ten commandments which God spake amid thunder and lightning at Mount Sinai, and which He afterwards wrote with His own finger on two tables of stone.'

'Yes; the place which the Sabbath law occupies in the very midst of the ten commandments, which Christ came to establish as the rule of His kingdom, shows that it is for all time. Jesus died because we had broken these commandments, and He sends the Holy Spirit to write them anew, not on tables of stone, but on the hearts of His own people.'

'But the Jews said that Jesus did not keep the Sabbath. Did He not, mamma?' said Charlie.

'Jesus always kept the Sabbath holy. No one ever kept it as He did; but He did not keep the foolish traditions which

the Pharisees had added to the fourth commandment. Several times they found fault with Jesus for healing on the Sabbath, and He explained to them that to do so was a work of mercy, like pulling a sheep out of a pit into which it had fallen on the Sabbath day. We may be quite sure that Jesus never worked as a carpenter, or went a fishing with His disciples on the Sabbath. His custom was to attend the synagogue.'

'I don't understand, mamma, what difference was made when Jesus rose from the dead, and the first day of the week became the Lord's day.'

'When Jesus rose from the dead, a new reason for keeping the Sabbath was added. The first day of the week, the Christian Sabbath, then became a memorial of the Lord Jesus resting from His great work of redemption; and thus Christians have more reasons for observing the Lord's day than the Jews had. And the Lord blessed the Christian Sabbath; for on the first day of the week the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles, and on that day thousands were converted. Can you tell me, Nellie, on what day the Lord Jesus appeared to the apostle John when he was an exile in the island of Patmos?'

'Was it on the Sabbath day, mamma?'

'Yes, it was. For we read in Rev. i. 10, John's own words, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, &c." These words show that at the time when the book of Revelation was written, the Lord's day was observed by the Christians, and that Jesus met with His own people on that day.'

'In Isaiah lvi. 6, 7, there is a promise to the Gentiles who should come to Christ, and keep holy the Sabbath. I would like you to read it, Charlie.'

'"Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be

His servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, &c."'

'Are the sons of the stranger the Gentiles, mamma?'

'Yes. The Gentile nations were strangers to the covenant of promise, till the gospel was preached to them after the day of Pentecost. Then many of them came to Jesus, and kept His Sabbath; and many more are still coming, and will yet come to Him. This promise has been remarkably fulfilled to all who have kept the Sabbath. Britain and America owe much of their prosperity to the regard they have paid to the Lord's day. God's word is sure—"Them that honour Me, I will honour." The golden rule requires every one of us to do what we can to secure the rest of the Sabbath to others.'

'I know the golden rule, mamma. It is, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." But I don't see how it requires us to keep the Sabbath.'

'Do you think, Charlie, that little boys would like to be obliged to go to school and learn geography, and grammar, and arithmetic, &c., on Sabbath, the same as on other days; or that apprentice boys would like to be obliged to toil in the workshop on Sabbaths, as well as on week-days?'

'No, mamma, I am sure they would not. And I think you mean that we ought to do all we can to prevent any one from being obliged to work on Sabbath, because we would not like to be obliged to work on that day ourselves.'

'That is exactly what I mean. Men who work on railways or in steamers need the Sabbath as much as we do; and it is cruel as well as sinful to deprive them of it. There are many more reasons which show the wisdom of God in providing the Sabbath for man, but you will understand them better when you are older. God's command and His promised blessing

sufficient to assure us, that, in keeping this commandment, there is great reward. *How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?*'

The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, not from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days; and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy.'

'O day most calm, most bright,
The fruit of this, the next world's bud;
Th' indorsement of supreme delight,
Writ by a friend, and with his blood;
The couch of time; care's balm and bay:—
The week were dark, but for thy light;
Thy torch doth shew the way.

'The Sundays of man's life,
Threaded together on time's string,
Make bracelets to adorn the wife
Of the eternal, glorious King.
On Sunday, heaven's gate stands ope;
Blessings are plentiful and rife;
More plentiful than hope.

'Thou art a day of mirth;
And where the week-days trail on ground,
Thy flight is higher, as thy birth.
O let me take thee at the bound,
Leaping with thee from seven to seven,
Till that we both, being tossed from earth,
Fly hand in hand to heaven!'

XXXV.

COMMANDMENT WITH PROMISE.

'HONOUR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER; THAT THY DAYS MAY BE LONG UPON THE LAND WHICH THE LORD THY GOD GIVETH THEE.'

63. *Which is the fifth commandment?*

The fifth commandment is, Honour thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

64. *What is required in the fifth commandment?*

The fifth commandment requireth the preserving the honour, and performing the duties belonging to every one in their several places and relations, as superiors, inferiors, or equals.

65. *What is forbidden in the fifth commandment?*

The fifth commandment forbiddeth the neglecting of, or doing any thing against, the honour and duty which belongeth to every one in their several places and relations.

66. *What is the reason annexed to the fifth commandment?*

The reason annexed to the fifth commandment, is a promise of long life and prosperity (as far as it shall serve for God's glory and their own good) to all such as keep this commandment.

'MAMMA, what is the meaning of this verse?' asked Nellie, 'But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free.' (Mark vii. 11.)

'If you look at the verses which precede and follow, you will see that this was one of the precepts given by the Pharisees in direct opposition to one of the commandments. *You* can tell me which of them this precept opposes?'

After reading the ninth and tenth verses, Nellie replied: 'The fifth commandment is, Honour thy father and thy mother; but I don't understand how saying, It is a gift, breaks the fifth commandment.'

'Can you tell me what, Honour thy father, &c., means?'

'O yes, mamma. It is to love, obey, and respect them.'

'All that is implied in honouring parents. But it is also our duty to provide for their wants. When old enough to do so, children honour their parents by working for them. Read 1 Tim. v. 4, Charlie.'

'But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God.'

'The Pharisees tried to evade the duty of providing for parents by devoting a portion of their means to some religious object, and making this an excuse for not giving more money to their parents. By saying, It is corban; or, I have given the money to God, they thought they could free themselves from the obligation to honour their parents with their substance. But God will not accept such offerings. No child who neglects the fifth commandment can ever please God or enjoy His blessing. A remarkable reason is annexed to this commandment. What is it, Charlie?'

'*The reason annexed to the fifth commandment is, a promise of long life and prosperity, (as far as it shall serve for God's glory and their own good), to all such as keep this commandment.*'

'Paul distinguishes this commandment as the first commandment with promise. That thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, is the promise added to this commandment.'

'But, mamma,' replied Nellie, 'obedient children do not

always live long. Little cousin Mary was a good little girl, and she died when she was only six years old.'

'Little Mary was a sweet, loving, gentle child, and Jesus honoured her by taking her early home to Himself, and so preserving her from all the sorrows and temptations of this evil world. Jesus knew that it was best *for God's glory and her own good* to take little Mary to the home for little children, above the bright blue sky.'

'But then, mamma, what does the promise of long life really mean?'

'It means that children who honour their parents are far more likely to live long than disobedient children; and that, should they die early, it will only be because God knows that it is better for them to be with Jesus. Disobedience to parents has brought thousands of young people to an early grave. Often children get colds and meet with accidents by neglecting the advice of their parents, and so shorten their lives. Do you remember what became of Absalom?'

'Joab killed Absalom when he was fighting against his father.'

'Yes, Charlie. The story of Absalom is a sad warning to undutiful children. By rebelling against his father, he brought upon himself an early and an awful death. How very different the history of Joseph. He honoured his father from childhood; and, though for a time he suffered cruel persecution, yet afterwards God rewarded him.'

'I know about Joseph,' said little Alice. 'God made him rich and great in Egypt; and then he sent waggons to bring his father and his brothers to live near him, and was so kind to them all.'

'Joseph's kindness to his father is a beautiful picture of filial piety, only excelled by one example. Whose is it, Charlie?'

'I think it is that of Jesus on the cross, mamma.'

'In His dying moments Jesus, by His example, gave us anew the old commandment, Honour thy father and thy mother. Read the verses, Nellie. (John xix. 26, 27).'

'"When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home."'

'The child Jesus obeyed His parents, and the man Christ Jesus in His agony on the cross remembered His mother and provided a home for her, and so left us an example that we should follow His steps. This commandment is exceeding broad. Tell me, Nellie, what it requires?'

'*The fifth commandment requireth the preserving the honour, and performing the duties, belonging to every one in their several places and relations, as superiors, inferiors, or equals.*'

'Honour thy father and thy mother, is the child's commandment. Enfolded in these simple words are all the duties of parents and children, teachers and scholars, masters and servants. Paul shews us this when he quotes this commandment, and explains it, in Eph. vi. The child who has learned to honour father and mother, will be dutiful to all who have claims upon him, whether *superiors, inferiors, or equals.* Now tell me, Charlie, where this commandment stands in the decalogue?'

'It is the fifth, mamma. This is in the very middle. I do not know whether it is in the first or second table.'

'The Bible does not tell us this; and it is usually reckoned as belonging to the second table, which contains our duty to man. Some persons, however, think that the fifth commandment belongs to the first table; because to a child, a parent is God's representative. But to whichever table it belongs, Honour thy

father and thy mother is the connecting link between the two tables; and, to a child, all the commandments hang on this one.'

'Our teacher told us about the Rechabites when the fifth commandment was our lesson,' Nellie remarked.

'The history of the Rechabites shews us how God honours and rewards those who honour their parents (Jer. xxxv.); and it illustrates a precept which you have all learned. Little Alice can repeat Col. iii. 20. And the child repeated the words, "Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well-pleasing to the Lord."'

'I was reading a story, mamma, about an eruption of Mount Etna, when all the people around were fleeing for safety, carrying their treasures with them. Two brothers recollected that their father and mother were too old and feeble to save themselves; and, leaving all their wealth, the one took his father, and the other his mother, on his shoulders, and carried them through the smoke and flames.'

'These were noble youths; and I am sure they would find a rich reward for so honouring their parents. "A wise son maketh a glad father; but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother."'

'If children would only remember that soon their kind parents may be taken from them, they could not grieve them by disobedience. A child's grief, on the death of a tender mother, is thus described in one of Jane Taylor's "Hymns for Infant Minds"—

"And now I recollect with pain
The many times I grieved her sore;
Oh! if she would but come again,
I think I'd vex her so no more.
How I would watch her gentle eye;
'Twould be my play to do her will;
And she would never have to sigh
Again for my behaving ill."'

XXXVI.

THOU SHALT NOT KILL.

'WHOSO HATETH HIS BROTHER IS A MURDERER: AND YE KNOW THAT NO MURDERER HATH ETERNAL LIFE ABIDING IN HIM.'

67. *Which is the sixth commandment?*
The sixth commandment is, Thou shalt not kill.

68. *What is required in the sixth commandment?*
The sixth commandment requireth all lawful endeavours to preserve our own life, and the life of others.

69. *What is forbidden in the sixth commandment?*
The sixth commandment forbiddeth the taking away of our own life, or the life of our neighbour unjustly, or whatsoever tendeth thereunto.

'MAMMA, surely we never broke the sixth commandment. I never killed anybody.'

'No, Charlie, you never killed anyone; but it is not very long since I heard a little boy speak very angrily to his sister and call her harsh names, because she had accidentally broken one of his toys.'

'It was very bad of Alice to break the pretty cottage Uncle gave me, and I thought she did it on purpose,' Charlie replied, colouring deeply.

'It was very unkind of you to think so, and very wrong of you to be so angry. You must have forgotten what Jesus says of those who get angry without a cause. Read His words in Matt. v. 21-26.' And Charlie read:—

'"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment; but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment, &c."'

'Does that mean that whenever we are angry, we break the sixth commandment?' asked Nellie.

'Sometimes it is right to be angry; but whenever we are so without cause, or are unwilling to forgive and be reconciled, we break this commandment. Anger is the germ of murder. It was anger that led Cain to kill his brother. Let us watch against this sin, for anger resteth in the bosom of fools. Paul gives us a rule for our guidance when we are justly angry. Ephesians iv. 26.'

'"Be ye angry, and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath."'

'You can tell me some occasions on which good men were justly angry?'

'Moses was angry when he saw the people worshipping the golden calf,' said Charlie.

'Nehemiah was very angry with the rulers for oppressing the people,' added Nellie.

'On these occasions these good men were right to be angry, and their being so did good to those whom they reproved; but sometimes anger, even when just, has led good men into sin. David's anger, on one occasion, almost led him to shed innocent blood.'

'That was when Abigail went to him with bread and corn and wine,' said Nellie.

'Yes. Abigail's wise conduct at that time, and her good advice, kept David from much sin, and preserved the lives of many. *What is required in the sixth commandment*, Charlie?'

sixth commandment requireth all lawful endeavours to e our own life, and the life of others.'

you remember how Paul shewed his care of his own d of the lives of those with him in the ship?'

told them that not one of them would be drowned, and them to take food for their health.'

adiah hid the prophets in caves, and fed them with and water to save their lives,' said little Alice.

. And what did Ebed-melech do to save Jeremiah's life?'

ed-melech went to the king and told him that Jeremiah e to die in the dungeon, and the king allowed him to im out. And he got old rags and let them down to ah to put under his armholes, and got him pulled out rds. And God spared Ebed-melech's life, because he en kind to this prophet.'

se good men used *lawful endeavours to preserve the life ers*, and God rewarded their efforts and preserved wn lives. Nellie, *What is forbidden in the sixth dment?*'

sixth commandment forbiddeth the taking away of our e, or the life of our neighbour unjustly, or whatsoever thereunto.'

take away one's own life is an awful sin,—a sin which be repented of.'

at makes anyone kill himself, mamma?'

I know what made Judas hang himself?'

was so miserable because he had betrayed Jesus, that d not bear to live.'

t was it. Suicide is the awful resource of those who that they have God to go to in their trouble. Instead ing to God and seeking mercy through Jesus, they rush into eternity.'

'A young man who had resolved to drown himself, when on his way to the spot where he intended to cast himself into the water, saw a crowd assembled. Standing for a moment, his ear caught the words, "Do thyself no harm." He listened, heard the gospel preached, renounced his awful purpose, and returned to his lodging to pray. Soon he found rest in Jesus, and the peace of God filled his soul. Then the temptation to commit suicide was gone for ever, and he honoured Jesus with the life so wonderfully preserved. Peace with God is the great preservative from temptation of every kind.'

'It was very strange, mamma, that the preacher should have been repeating the words, Do thyself no harm, when the man was going to drown himself.'

'It was because God, in His wonderful providence, had determined to save this man, that he guided the preacher to speak these words at that very moment.'

'You can tell me now some of the things which tend to take away our own or our neighbour's life?'

'Drinking is one of them, mamma. I heard papa say that a great many people kill themselves every year with strong drink.'

'Intemperance, or vice of any kind, tends to shorten life, and is forbidden by this commandment. It is estimated that in the United Kingdom alone, 60,000 persons die annually from the effects of intoxicating drink.'

'Anger, too, mamma,' added Nellie.

'Yes, anger and malice and hatred, all tend to shorten life. Read what John says of hatred. 1 John iii. 15.'

'"Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."'

'I will tell you a story of a little girl who understood this commandment well. One night after she had gone to bed, her

other found her crying very bitterly. When asked what as vexing her so, she replied, "O mother, I killed Annie my heart to-day, and I can't sleep till I ask her to rgive me."'

'The two companions who lived near and were very fond of ch other, had quarrelled that day and spoken unkind words, id little Nellie's tender conscience told her that angry elings were murder in her heart. Her mother wrapped up e child warmly, and her father took her in his arms, and rried her to the home of her little companion. There they und Annie sorrowing over her own share in the quarrel, and ry glad to kiss her companion and have it all made up. hen little Nellie could sleep in peace.'

'I never knew before, mamma,' said Charlie, 'that we broke ie sixth commandment, when we quarrelled with our com- anions at play.'

'The sixth commandment, like all the others, is exceeding oad. It requires us to be kind one to another, tender- earted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake as forgiven us.'

'But, mamma,' added Nellie, 'if every wrong thought is a n, I will never be able to keep the commandments.'

'No, my dear, you never can; but Christ Jesus has obeyed iem all for you, and is waiting to forgive your sins, and give ou grace to follow Him. For sinners Jesus died.'

XXXVII.

THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.

'WHATSOEVER THINGS ARE PURE, WHATSOEVER THINGS ARE LOVELY, WHATSOEVER THINGS ARE OF GOOD REPORT; THINK ON THESE THINGS.'

70. *Which is the seventh commandment?*
The seventh commandment is, Thou shalt not commit adultery.

71. *What is required in the seventh commandment?*
The seventh commandment requireth the preservation of our own and our neighbour's chastity, in heart, speech, and behaviour.

72. *What is forbidden in the seventh commandment?*
The seventh commandment forbiddeth all unchaste thoughts, words, and actions.

'I KNOW the text, mamma,' said little Alice. 'It was, THINK ON THESE THINGS.'

'That was the text. But can you tell me anything Mr B— said about these words?'

'He said that the way to speak right words, and to do right things, is to think good thoughts.'

'All the sermon was about the things we should think on,' added Charlie. 'The verse names six things, and the sermon was on the last three:—"Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report."'

'God's law alone can control our thoughts. That is the

great difference between it and human laws. Human laws may control our actions, but God's law alone can rule our thoughts.'

'But, mamma, how can we make ourselves think good thoughts?' asked Nellie.

'We must ask God to help us, and we must carefully watch against evil thoughts. Have you forgotten what Mr B— told us we should do, Nellie?'

'He said that one way to help us to think rightly, was to read good books and avoid bad ones; and he told us of a boy who became very wicked by reading bad books. A companion lent him some works, which he knew his father would never have allowed him to read; and he read them secretly till he lost all taste for the Bible, ran away from his home, and went far astray.'

'And then,' Charlie added, 'he told us that the best way to get pure thoughts in our hearts, was to read and think of the Bible, and keep away from bad companions; and he read part of the first psalm.'

'I know the psalm, mamma,' said little Alice. And she repeated:—

'That man hath perfect blessedness
Who walketh not astray
In counsel of ungodly men,
Nor stands in sinners' way,
Nor sitteth in the scorner's chair:
But placeth his delight
Upon God's law, and meditates
On His law day and night.'

'To think on God's word, is the way to become pure in heart; for God's word is very pure. Those who love it, will avoid bad companions, and be enabled to keep themselves pure.'

'*What is forbidden in the seventh commandment?*'

'*The seventh commandment forbiddeth all unchaste thoughts, words, and actions.*'

'This commandment forbids everything that is immodest or impure. When Jesus, in His sermon on the mount, explained this commandment, He warned us against even looking upon any object which might tempt us to sin. One sinful thought, when cherished, may lead to terribly wicked actions. You know what a very wicked man Herod was?'

'It was Herod who beheaded John the Baptist,' said little Alice.

'Herod cherished one sinful thought—looked on one whom he should have shunned—till he became a slave to his own evil passion, and was led captive by Satan at his will. Not long before, Herod had listened to John's preaching, and been impressed by it; but this unchaste thought, cherished in his heart, choked the good seed.'

'One of the beatitudes is about purity.'

'It is, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."'

'The pure in heart are those in whom the Spirit dwells. When He comes into the soul, impure thoughts cannot dwell there; and our bodies become temples of the Holy Spirit. Read 1 Cor. vi. 19, Charlie.'

'"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?"'

'What a wonderful thought that our bodies should be temples of the Holy Ghost! What is a temple for?'

'It is a place for worship.'

'Surely, then, we should consecrate our bodies to God's *service*, that He may come and dwell in us. Jesus says, "If

a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Supposing the Queen should promise to visit us, would we not be very careful to have our house clean and in order, and everything in it as nice as we could, to receive her?'

'O yes, mamma. I am sure we would all be very busy preparing for her; but, mamma, the Queen will never come to see us.'

'No, Alice dear, I am sure she will not; but is it not far better to have Jesus Himself, the King of kings, to come and dwell in us? And surely we should be careful to avoid doing anything which would keep Him from coming to dwell with us. To indulge in sin, is to shut the door of our hearts against Jesus; and if we shut Him out, who will fill our hearts?'

'Is it Satan, mamma?'

'If we do not admit Jesus, Satan will keep possession; and what an awful thought that our bodies should be temples of Satan! Let us choose Jesus; and, that our bodies may be fit abodes for Him, let us be temperate in all things. One temptation which we should specially watch against, is intemperance, for the Spirit cannot dwell in those who indulge in bad habits. Read Pro. xxiii. 31.'

'"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder."'

'Our words, too, we must watch with special care, only speaking of such things as are pure, lovely, and of good report. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you as becometh saints.'

Then mamma told the children the sad story of the young girl who so touchingly describes her own melancholy history in the poem called 'Beautiful Snow.' Her childhood had

been a happy one; but scarcely had it ended, when she listened to the tempter,—and after spending a few years in sinful ways, she sank into an early grave. The poem was found after her death.

'Once I was pure as the snow, but I fell—
Fell like the snow-flakes, from heaven to hell!
Fell to be trampled as filth on the street,
Fell to be scoffed, to be spit on and beat;
Pleading,—Cursing,—Dreading to die,
Selling my soul to whoever would buy;
Dealing in shame for a morsel of bread,
Hating the living, and fearing the dead;—
Merciful God, have I fallen so low?
And yet I was once like the beautiful snow!

'Once I was fair as the beautiful snow,
With an eye like a crystal, a heart like its glow;
Once I was loved for my innocent grace—
Flattered and sought for the charms of my face!
Father,—Mother,—Sister,—and all,
God and myself, I have lost by my fall;
The veriest wretch that goes shivering by,
Will make a wide swoop lest I wander too nigh;
For all that is on or above me I know,
There is nothing so pure as the beautiful snow.
.

'Helpless and foul as the trampled snow,
Sinner, despair not! Christ stoopeth low
To rescue the soul that is lost in sin,
And raise it to life and enjoyment again.
Groaning,—Bleeding,—Dying for thee,
The Crucified hung on the accursed tree!
His accents of mercy fell soft on thine ear,
"Is there mercy for me? Will He heed my weak prayer?"
O God! in the stream that for sinners did flow,
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.'

XXXVIII.

THOU SHALT NOT STEAL.

'LET HIM THAT STOLE STEAL NO MORE: BUT RATHER LET HIM LABOUR, WORKING WITH HIS HANDS THE THING WHICH IS GOOD.'

73. *Which is the eighth commandment?*
The eighth commandment is, Thou shalt not steal.

74. *What is required in the eighth commandment?*
The eighth commandment requireth the lawful procuring and furthering the wealth and outward estate of ourselves and others.

75. *What is forbidden in the eighth commandment?*
The eighth commandment forbiddeth whatsoever doth or may unjustly hinder our own or our neighbour's wealth or outward estate.

'MAMMA, the eighth commandment is a very easy one,' said little Alice. 'It is, *Thou shalt not steal.*'

'Yes, dear; but do you know what the eighth commandment bids us do?'

'No, mamma. It does not tell us to do anything.'

'I think it does. You know what the Catechism says Charlie.' And Charlie repeated:—

'*The eighth commandment requireth the lawful procuring and furthering the wealth and outward estate of ourselves and others.*'

'Honest industry is the duty specially taught in this commandment. It requires masters to give just wages to their servants, and servants to be diligent and faithful to their masters, so *procuring and furthering the wealth* of each other.'

'But, mamma, I don't understand how the words, *Thou shalt not steal*, teach all these duties.'

'Read Eph. iv. 28, and I think it will help you to understand this commandment.'

'And Nellie read, '"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."'

'You know that poverty often tempts men to steal; and in this verse, Paul commands those who had formerly been thieves to labour honestly, that they might never again be tempted to take what was not their own. You remember Agur's prayer in Pro. xxx. 8, 9.'

'I know it, mamma,' said Charlie. 'Agur prayed, "Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me; lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain."'

'That prayer warns us against the dangers connected with either poverty or riches; and shews us that in order to avoid being tempted to steal, we ought to earn our bread by honest toil. Idleness and waste have led many a one to steal. Now tell me, Nellie, *What is forbidden in the eighth commandment?*'

'*The eighth commandment forbiddeth whatsoever doth, or may unjustly, hinder our own or our neighbour's wealth or outward estate.*'

'This commandment refers chiefly to money; and forbids every practice, however common it may be, by which injustice is done to our neighbour in money matters. It forbids some practices which are so common in trade, that many persons entirely overlook their dishonesty; but God takes notice of every thing we do. Read Pro. xx. 14.'

'"It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer; but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth." What does that mean, *mamma?*' asked Charlie.

'That verse describes a person going into a shop to buy something, and in order to get it very cheap, he tells the shopkeeper that it is very little worth, and persuades him to sell it for a sum less than its value, and then he goes away and tells others what a bargain he has got.'

'But that is not stealing, mamma,' said Charlie.

'It is not stealing in the world's eye, and worldly people would commend such persons for their cleverness; but God's word condemns them as dishonest. If we cannot afford to pay the fair price for what we wish, we should not buy it.'

'But, mamma, sometimes shopkeepers ask far too dear. Should we always give them whatever price they ask?'

'If they are honest men, they will not ask more than the fair price; and if we know that they do so, we should not deal with them. It is far better to give our money to honest men. But this commandment forbids idleness as well as dishonesty. Idleness *hinders our own or our neighbour's wealth.*'

'Surely it is not so bad as stealing, mamma?'

'I fear that it is stealing. When a servant idles away his time, instead of being diligent at his work, he steals his master's money, because he receives wages for work which he has not done; and when boys or girls trifle away their time at school, instead of attending to their lessons, they are stealing their parents' money.'

'I never thought trifling was stealing before.'

'Often we sin from want of thought; and this shews us how much need we have to hide God's commandment in our hearts that we may not sin against Him, and to pray, "Search me, O God, and know my heart." Do you remember the picture of industry Solomon sets before the sluggard? Pro. vi. 6-11.'

'"Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her

meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest." I know

"How doth the little busy bee
Improve each shining hour,
And gather honey all the day
From every opening flower."'

'The bee is the emblem of industry; and if we are like it, there is little danger of our ever becoming so poor as to be tempted to steal. But while always industrious, we must watch against the love of money, for this passion often leads to dishonesty.'

'I heard papa speaking about gambling one day, and he said that it was stealing. How is that, mamma?' asked Charlie.

'Gambling is stealing, because whatever money is won by one person, is lost by another. It is a very wicked practice, and one which no young person should ever begin.'

'I don't understand why it is so very dishonest, when those who play know that they must either lose or win.'

'That is where the sin lies. Gamblers know that they cannot play without robbing either themselves or their neighbours; and no honest man could agree to such a thing. Many a young man has got into debt and been led to ruin, by learning to gamble.'

'Is it a sin to get into debt, mamma?' asked Nellie.

'Good men have sometimes got into debt through the misconduct of others, without any fault of their own; but to get into debt by gambling, or idleness, or extravagance, or want of forethought, is a great sin. It is taking money which is not our own. Read Rom. xiii. 8.'

'"Owe no man anything, but to love one another."'

'I did not know there were so many different ways of breaking this commandment,' said Charlie.

'We are surrounded by temptations to dishonesty; and whether rich or poor, we need the grace of God to enable us to overcome them, and to walk honestly as children of the light.'

About one hundred years ago, a boy named Adam Clark was apprenticed to a linen draper. He was attentive to his duties, and for a time his master was well pleased with him. One day when measuring a piece of cloth, it was found too short; and his master took the one end of the piece in his hand, and gave the boy the other piece, saying, 'Pull, Adam, pull.' But the boy replied, 'Sir, I can't.'

'You can't,' said his master. 'What do you mean? You must do what I wish.'

'I can't, sir,' the boy again replied, 'because it is not honest.'

'Then you leave my shop immediately. You will never do for a linen draper,' said his master in great anger.

With a sorrowful heart the boy left his situation and went home. When he told his father why he had been dismissed, he commended him for his conduct, and encouraged him to trust God to provide a better situation for him. Adam Clark afterwards became a distinguished scholar and commentator, and never had cause to regret having been dismissed from the linen draper's shop.

Watch against the first temptation to dishonesty. 'My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.' 'Them that honour me, I will honour.'

'Theft will not be always hidden;
Though we fancy none can spy;
When we take a thing forbidden,
God beholds it with His eye.

'Guard my heart, O God of heaven,
Lest I covet what's not mine!
Lest I steal what is not given,
Guard my heart and hands from sin.'

XXXIX.

TRUTH.

'THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THY NEIGHBOUR. PUTTING AWAY LYING, SPEAK EVERY MAN TRUTH WITH HIS NEIGHBOUR.'

76. *Which is the ninth commandment?*

The ninth commandment is, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

77. *What is required in the ninth commandment?*

The ninth commandment requireth the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man, and of our own and our neighbour's good name, especially in witness-bearing.

78. *What is forbidden in the ninth commandment?*

The ninth commandment forbiddeth whatsoever is prejudicial to truth, or injurious to our own or our neighbour's good name.

'MAMMA, what is *false witness?*' asked Charlie, when he had repeated these words.

'Do you know what it is to be a witness in a court of justice, Charlie?'

'I know that when any one is to be tried, people are summoned to give evidence.'

'These persons are called witnesses, and they promise upon oath to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. For a witness to say anything that is untrue, is a sin of an awfully aggravated kind. A faithful witness will not

lie; but a false witness will utter lies. We shall read the story of Naboth, and it will shew you what a terrible thing it is to bear false witness. 1 Kings xxi. 1-14.'

'What an *awfully* wicked woman Jezebel must have been, mamma!'

'*Awfully* wicked, Charlie! Only think of what a wicked purpose she formed,—to murder Naboth, because he had had courage to obey God, rather than to please the king; and then how many persons she caused to sin in executing her wicked plot. But how did she get the law to condemn him when he was innocent?'

'It was the false witnesses who did it, mamma. Verse 13th says: "And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king." That was not true.'

'No, it was not true. Naboth was a good man; and it was because he feared God, that he had refused to sell his vineyard, and yet he was stoned to death on the testimony of false witnesses. This shews what an awful thing it is to bear false witness. No one can tell how dreadful the consequences of such a sin may be.'

'False witnesses spoke against Stephen, mamma.'

'Stephen's enemies suborned men, that is, got them to bear false witness, saying, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God." It is an awful crime to suborn witnesses.'

'False witnesses spoke against Jesus, too, mamma.'

'Even the holy Jesus suffered from false witnesses. Read Mark xiv. 55-59, Nellie.'

'"And the chief priests and all the council sought for

witness against Jesus to put Him to death; and found none. For many bare false witness against Him; but their witness agreed not together, &c."'

'These instances shew us that innocent persons may be condemned by false witnesses, and should make us very careful to avoid saying anything that is untrue, or injurious to our own or our neighbour's good name. *What is required in the ninth commandment?*'

'*The ninth commandment requireth the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man, and of our own and our neighbour's good name, especially in witness-bearing.*'

'We may never be called upon to bear witness in court, but we are always required to speak the truth, and to protect our neighbour's good name. What does Solomon say of a good name? Pro. xx. 1.'

'"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches; and loving favour rather than silver and gold."'

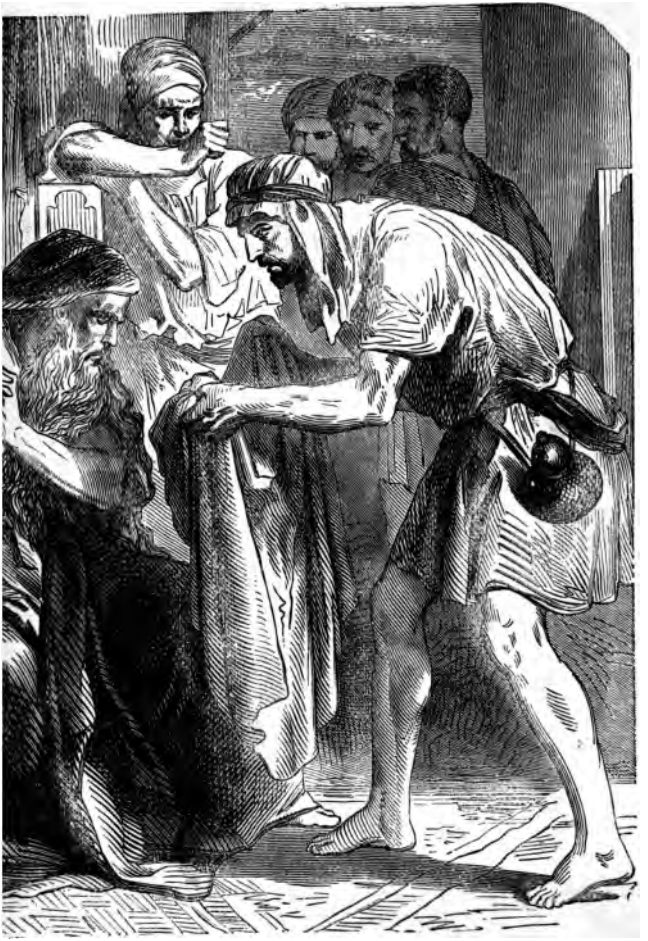
'To rob a neighbour of his good name, is to injure him far more seriously than to steal his purse, because his good name is of far more value. The 15th Psalm describes the good man as one who backbiteth not with his tongue, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.'

'What is *maintaining and promoting of truth*, mamma?'

'It is being very careful always to speak of things exactly as they happened, and doing all we can to get others to do the same. Alice knows Dr. Watt's hymn about truth,' and she repeated:

'O, 'tis a lovely thing for youth
To walk betimes in wisdom's way;
To fear a lie, to speak the truth,
That we may trust to all they say.'

'You all know the story of little George Washington,



Jacob's sons deceiving their father.

he boy that could not tell a lie. Supposing little George Washington had not been a truth-loving boy, and had been nore afraid of punishment than of telling a lie, what would he have said when his papa asked about the cherry ree?'

'He would have said, "I don't know who cut it;" or perhaps he would have said, "some one else had done it."'

'Had he laid the blame on any one else, that would have been bearing false witness against his neighbour.'

'That is the way the boys in our school sometimes do, namma. One day a boy broke a window, and he said it was nother boy who had been playing with him who had done it; ut the teacher found it out, and was very angry.'

'But I can tell you of a little boy named Charlie, who was laying with his ball in the school-yard one morning before chool began, and accidentally broke a pane of glass. When Charlie saw what he had done, he was frightened, but he had been taught to love the truth, and stick to it at all times; and e did not think for a moment of trying to hide what he had one. At once—though trembling with fear—he ran along he road to meet his teacher, and addressing him, said, "Stop moment, please, sir."'

'Oh, Charlie. Good morning. Why, what's the matter ow, my little man?'

'I broke your window, sir, but I didn't mean to. I'm very orry for it. I did it with my ball, and the ball is in the chool-room now.'

'Poor child,' said the teacher, who saw his eyes filled with ears, and a look of great distress in his face, 'so you ran all he way to tell me, did you? You've begun right, Charlie, y boy. Whatever mischief you do, never be afraid or shamed to tell of it.'

'Liars are sure to be found out some time or other. It is far better to have courage to speak the truth, whatever be the consequence. Read Pro. xii. 19, 22.'

'"The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment." "Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are His delight."'

'The words, *They that deal truly*, show us that we must act the truth, as well as speak the truth.'

'But what is acting the truth, mamma? I thought we could only speak the truth.'

'Do you think that Joseph's brethren acted truthfully, when they dipped his coat of many colours in blood, and sent it to their father?'

'That was just a lie.'

'That was acting a lie. Though they did not say that Joseph had been torn in pieces, they led their father to believe this, by shewing him his coat stained with blood. We must not only speak the truth, but do the truth, and think the truth, if we would be followers of Him who is the Truth, The Faithful and True Witness.'

'Be brave to do the right,
And scorn to be untrue;
When fear would whisper yield,—
Ask,—What would Jesus do?'

'DELIVER MY SOUL, O LORD, FROM LYING LIPS.'

XL.

CONTENTMENT.

'THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE, THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOUR'S WIFE, NOR HIS MAN-SERVANT, NOR HIS MAID-SERVANT, NOR HIS OX, NOR HIS ASS, NOR ANY THING THAT IS THY NEIGHBOUR'S.'

79. *Which is the tenth commandment?*

The tenth commandment is, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

80. *What is required in the tenth commandment?*

The tenth commandment requireth full contentment with our own condition, with a right and charitable frame of spirit toward our neighbour, and all that is his.

81. *What is forbidden in the tenth commandment?*

The tenth commandment forbiddeth all discontentment with our own estate, envying or grieving at the good of our neighbour, and all inordinate motions and affections to any thing that is his.

'"NOT that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."'

'That is the verse papa told us to learn this morning, mamma. I can say it now.'

'And Charlie, do you know whose words these are?'

'They are Paul's,—for the verse is in the fourth chapter of Philippians, and Paul wrote that epistle.'

'Paul was thanking the Christians at Philippi for having kindly sent supplies to him once and again. And he tells

them that, though they had not done so, he would not have complained of his poverty, for he had learned always to be content. Then he tells them the secret of his being so. If you read the next two verses, you will see what it was.'

'This is it, mamma,' and Nellie read: '"I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me."'

'That is the blessed secret of contentment. If we have Christ in our hearts, and trust Him fully, He will enable us to do or to bear whatever He appoints.'

'Cowper writes in one of his beautiful hymns:—

"In vain, by reason and by rule,
We try to bend the will;
For none, but in the Saviour's school,
Can learn the Heavenly skill."'

'Can you tell me, Nellie, which commandment requires contentment?'

'Our Catechism says—*The tenth commandment requireth full contentment with our own condition, with a right and charitable frame of spirit toward our neighbour, and all that is his.*'

'Contentment is the duty taught us in this commandment.'

'I don't understand how, mamma; because the tenth commandment is—*Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.*'

'You can tell me what this commandment forbids?'

'O, yes; that is quite plain. It forbids covetousness.'

'But what is covetousness?'

'It is wishing for any thing that is our neighbour's.'

'And if we, like Paul, had learned always to be content,

would we wish for any thing that God had given to our neighbour, and had withheld from us?'

'I see the meaning of it now, mamma. If we are not contented, we must be covetous.'

'Read Heb. xiii. 5, 6, and that passage will shew you that covetousness and contentment are directly opposed to each other.'

'"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."'

'Those who have Christ for their portion, ought to be contented with their lot in this world; but those who have not Christ, should never be contented till they find Him. He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?'

'What is *a right and charitable frame of spirit toward our neighbour*, mamma?' asked Charlie.

'It is a kind and loving disposition towards others; and that points out another duty, besides contentment, taught us in the tenth commandment. How does a kind disposition prompt us to act towards those who are in want?'

'We should help them, mamma.'

'If we are not covetous, we will be willing to let others share the good things God has given us. We shall read the story of the covetous rich man in Luke xii., and you will see that his covetousness consisted in storing up his wealth for himself, and not benefitting others with it. We are not told that he had gained it unjustly.'

When they had read the words: 'But God said unto him,

Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee,' Charlie said, 'there was a boy in our school not very long ago, and he was in his class one day, and he died the next.'

'Death often comes very suddenly. None of us know how soon it may come to any of us; but if our treasure is in heaven, sudden death will be sudden glory. To those whose only treasure is on earth, how awful a thing death is! Paul tells us what the tenth commandment shewed him. Read Rom. vii. 7.'

'"I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."'

'These words shewed Paul the sinfulness of his own heart, and sent him to the school of Christ, where he learned to be content. If the rich man we have been reading of had come to Jesus, he would have learned to sell the corn in his barns, and give to the poor, and rejoice in a treasure in heaven. But how will we look on those who enjoy comforts which we do not possess, if we have *a right and charitable frame of spirit?*'

'We will be glad they have so many good things.'

'Yes, we will rejoice with them that rejoice, never *envying or grieving at the good of our neighbours.*'

'Joseph's brethren envied him, mamma.'

'They were grieved because their father loved Joseph so much. That was envy; and you know to what sad consequences it led. Where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. The passage we have been reading, gives several reasons why we should avoid covetousness and envy, and be content with such things as we have. Can you tell me some of them?'

'One is that God takes care of the birds and the flowers, *and we* are better than they.'

'And another is, that our Father knows what things we need.'

'The kingdom of God is the one thing we ought to covet; then all that is for our good will be added. A servant girl, who was looking forward to years of comfort and pleasure in this world, had all her hopes disappointed by serious illness. An abscess formed in her knee, which made her quite lame, and caused her great suffering. Then she murmured and complained of God's dealings towards her; and in her impatience wished for death. The disease increased, and physicians told her that the limb must be amputated. This sad prospect made her think seriously of death, and she felt that she was not ready. In her distress she sought the Lord, and He heard her cry and led her to Jesus. Then she found such peace and comfort, that she bore the tedious operation without fear. Her own account of it was, "I seemed lying in the arms of Jesus, as if He came between me and that sharp knife. I had so much of His presence, that I was lifted up above my sufferings, painful though they were (chloroform was not then known). I felt in the Lord's hands, willing that He should do with me what seemed good in His sight."'

'Her life was spared; but hers was a life of weakness, suffering, and poverty. Still she never complained, but often blessed God for the sore affliction which had brought her to Jesus. Her uniform cheerfulness said plainly to those around, I HAVE LEARNED IN WHATSOEVER STATE I AM, THEREWITH TO BE CONTENT.'

XLI.

NONE PERFECT.

'IF WE SAY THAT WE HAVE NO SIN, WE DECEIVE OURSELVES, AND THE TRUTH IS NOT IN US.'

82. *Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?*

No mere man since the fall is able, in this life, perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but doth daily break them in thought, word, and deed.

'MAMMA, what is the meaning of *No mere man?*' asked Charlie, when he had read these words.

'Read the answer, leaving out the word *mere* (which signifies such, and nothing more), and perhaps you will understand it better.'

Charlie read, No man since the fall, &c., adding, 'That is quite plain, mamma; but why is it *No mere man* in the Catechism?'

'Because there is one person who lived and died in this world, without ever breaking any of the commandments, either in thought, in word, or in deed.'

'That was Jesus,' said little Alice.

'Yes. The man Christ Jesus kept all God's commandments perfectly. He alone did no sin. But is He a *mere* man? Charlie.'

'Jesus is God. I know now what *No mere man* means. It *is no* one but Jesus.'

'That is exactly what it means. Jesus is man but not a *mere* man. He is something more. He is both God and man in one person. If we wish to know what it is to keep the commandments perfectly, we must study the life of Jesus, and listen to His words. Read John viii. 29.'

'"And He that sent Me is with Me: the Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him."'

'You know the first words spoken by Jesus, which are written in the Bible?'

'That was when His parents found Him in the temple with the doctors.'

'I have found the place, mamma,' said Charlie. '"And He said unto them, How is it that ye sought Me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business."' Luke ii. 49.

'Long before Jesus was born at Bethlehem, it was written of Him in the Psalms, "I delight to do Thy will: yea, Thy law is within My heart." Jesus spent all His life in doing His Father's will. You remember what He said to His disciples when He was by the well at Sychar, and they asked Him to eat?'

'He said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of,"' Charlie replied.

'And,' Nellie added, 'when they wondered if any one had brought Him meat, Jesus said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work."'

'And when His work was nearly finished, and in His agony He prayed, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me," what did He add?'

'He added, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."'

'Jesus was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; and His was sinless obedience, such as *no mere man, since the fall*, ever rendered. Alice knows what the fall means.'

'When Eve took the fruit in the garden, and gave it to Adam, and he ate it too, that was *the fall*,' said little Alice.

'Our first parents were created, in the image of God, holy like Jesus. Before the fall, they were able to keep the commandments perfectly; but by their disobedience they, and all their descendants, lost the image of God, and became unable to keep His holy law. Instead of keeping the commandments perfectly, what do we all do?'

'We *daily break them in thought, word, and deed.*'

'But, mamma, good people keep God's commandments. It is the wicked people who break them every day,' said Charlie.

'The Lord's people love His commandments, and keep them carefully. They do not despise or neglect them like the wicked; but they cannot keep them perfectly, and are conscious in their hearts that they *daily break them in thought, word, and deed.* What did David, the man after God's own heart, say of the number of his transgressions? Psa. xl. 12.'

'"For innumerable evils have compassed me about; mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me."'

'That is David's confession. When he set God's holy law before his eyes, and compared himself with it, he exclaimed, "Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults. If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?' Three ways of breaking God's commandments are mentioned in the answer. Name them, Charlie.'

'It says, *in thought, word, and deed.*'

'But how can we break God's commandments *in thought?*'

'When we were learning the commandments, you told us *that we only* obeyed them when we did what they commanded

from the heart; that to wish to do what they forbade, was to break them.'

'Yes; the law of God is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. If we would keep God's commandments, we must watch our *thoughts*, as well as our *words* and *actions*. Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, and these produce evil words and evil deeds. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"'

'But, mamma, the new heart the Holy Spirit gives, is not wicked, surely?' said little Alice.

'No, dear; whatever comes from God is good, only good; but the new heart, or the new life, is put within us, beside the old sinful heart, which remains with us as long as we are in this world. This is what makes the Christian's life a constant warfare. His work is to resist the old sinful nature, and to nourish and strengthen the new life.'

'Surely we have not got two hearts, mamma?'

'Not two hearts, but two principles within us. Every one of us has a desperately wicked nature, and we need the grace of God to subdue the sin that dwells there, and make us like Jesus.

'A man who had been converted from heathenism by the preaching of a missionary, was, after a time, greatly distressed by his own evil heart. He found that sinful thoughts would come into his mind, notwithstanding all his efforts to keep them away, and he knew not what to do. One day, when conversing with the missionary, he said to him, "I feel that I have got two hearts; one heart loves God and loves His commandments, but the other heart loves the old wicked ways, and is always trying to make me do what is bad."

'Is not this very like Paul's experience in Rom. vii. 22-25?'

XLII.

NO DIFFERENCE.

'IT IS OF THE LORD'S MERCIES THAT WE ARE NOT CONSUMED, BECAUSE HIS COMPASSIONS FAIL NOT.'

83. *Are all transgressions of the law equally heinous?*

Some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others.

84. *What doth every sin deserve?*

Every sin deserveth God's wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come.

'WHO can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back Thy servant also from presumptuous sins.'

'Mamma, what are *presumptuous* sins?' asked Charlie.

'Presumptuous sins are acts of open, wilful rebellion, against God; quite different from those secret faults which are unknown to our fellowmen, and may even be unknown to ourselves. The Jewish ceremonial law provided no sacrifice for presumptuous sins. Those guilty of such transgressions were to be cut off. Read Num. xv. 30, 31.' Charlie read:—

'"But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken His commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off: his iniquity shall be upon him."'

'In the next chapter we find the narrative of the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; and that story shews us what a fearful thing it is to sin presumptuously.'

'The earth opened up and swallowed them alive,' said little Alice.

'But, mamma, what made it so very wicked of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, to offer incense?' Nellie asked.

'God had commanded that only Aaron and his sons should offer incense; and these men, and the two hundred and fifty who were with them, did so in direct rebellion against God. Their sin was very great, and their awful punishment is recorded for our warning. I think you will now be able to answer this question,—*Are all transgressions of the law equally heinous?* that is, alike offensive to God.'

'No, mamma; some sins are far greater than others.'

'Repeat the answer given in the Catechism, Nellie.'

'"*Some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others.*"'

'That some sins are greater than others, is clearly taught in many passages of Scripture. In John xix. 11, you find words spoken by Jesus, which illustrate this truth. Read the verse, Nellie.'

'"Jesus answered, Thou couldst have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered Me unto thee hath the greater sin."'

'Pilate's sin in delivering up Jesus to be crucified, was very great; and yet these words of Jesus tell us of one whose sin was greater than Pilate's.'

'That was Judas, mamma; he was far worse than Pilate, because he was one of Jesus' disciples.'

'That Judas was one of those who had followed Jesus, had listened to His teachings, and had seen His mighty works,

were circumstances which made his sin far greater than Pilate's. These were great *aggravations* of his guilt. You know what *aggravations* mean?'

'Aggravations are the things that made what he did worse, than it would have been otherwise.'

'Jesus tells us, "That servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."'

'That is the rule by which our conduct must be tried. And when we remember the many privileges we have enjoyed, we must not forget that, if we do not improve these, our sin will be far greater than that of those who have not had our opportunities. What did Jesus say of the cities where he had done most of His mighty works. Mat. xi. 20-24.'

'He said, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you."'

'These words are a very solemn warning to us.'

'But, mamma, another passage says, "there is no difference." I don't understand how that can be, when so many passages tell us that some sinners are worse than others.'

'The next question will explain this to you. "*What doth every sin deserve?*"' and Nellie read:—

'"*Every sin deserveth God's wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come.*"'

'That is a very solemn truth. The Bible does not say that only very great sins *deserve God's wrath and curse*, but *every sin;* and that is why there is no difference. Read Gal. iii. 10.'

'"It is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."'

'That *every one* includes all mankind,—little children as well as aged sinners,—the best of men as well as the worst. There is no difference, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Do you know the original meaning of the word *sin?*'

'No, mamma; what does it mean?' asked Charlie.

'The original word signifies to miss an aim, as an archer does who shoots short of his mark. All mankind have come short of the glory of God—the mark set before us. In this there is no difference.'

'"Every sinner deserves God's wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come."'

'What an awful thing sin must be, when even one sin deserves this awful punishment!'

'But, mamma, What is *God's wrath and curse?*' asked little Alice.

'*God's wrath and curse* is something which we cannot describe, or even imagine, it is so dreadful. It was the wrath and curse of God which He bore for us, that made Jesus sweat, as it were, great drops of blood in the garden, and cry on the cross, "My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Jesus endured all this to redeem us from the curse of the law, and now there is no condemnation to those who are in Him. Good men fear the wrath of God more than anything else. Job says, "Destruction from the Almighty was a terror to me." And another holy man of old says, "My flesh trembleth for fear of Thee; and I am afraid of Thy judgments."'

'Why were these men afraid, mamma, when they loved God, and knew that He would save them?'

'These good men had such a view of the holiness of God, and of their own sinfulness in His sight, that they trembled at the thought of their own unworthiness.

'The devoted missionary, Henry Martin, in a passage in his journal, writes:—

'"In prayer in the evening, I had such near and terrible views of *God's judgments* upon sinners in hell, that *my flesh trembled* for fear of them. The passages of God's word, that proved the certainty of hell torments, were brought to me in such a way as I never before felt, I flew trembling to Jesus Christ, as if the flame were taking hold of me. Oh! Christ will indeed save me, or else I perish."'

'O Christ, what burdens bowed Thy head!
Our load was laid on Thee;
Thou stoodest in the sinner's stead
Bearing all ill for me:
A victim led, Thy blood was shed;
Now there's no load for me.

Death and the curse were in our cup—
O Christ, 'twas full for Thee!
But thou hast drained the last dark drop—
'Tis empty now for me!
That bitter cup—Love drank it up;
Now blessing's draught for me.

The Father lifted up His rod—
O Christ, it fell on Thee!
Thou wast sore stricken of Thy God;
There's not one stroke for me.
Thy tears, Thy blood, beneath it flowed;
Thy bruising healeth me.'

XLIII.

FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST.

'HE THAT BELIEVETH ON THE SON, HATH EVERLASTING LIFE: AND HE THAT BELIEVETH NOT THE SON, SHALL NOT SEE LIFE.'

85. *What doth God require of us, that we may escape His wrath and curse due to us for sin?*

To escape the wrath and curse of God due to us for sin, God requireth of us faith in Jesus Christ, repentance unto life, with the diligent use of all the outward means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption.

86. *What is faith in Jesus Christ?*

Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation, as He is offered to us in the gospel.

'CAN any of you tell me in which chapter of the New Testament the word "faith" occurs twenty-three times?'

'Twenty-three times! mamma,' said Charlie.

'Yes, twenty-three times. Almost every verse begins with "By faith."'

'I have found it, mamma,' said Nellie. 'It is the eleventh of Hebrews, the chapter that tells us about Abel and Enoch and Noah, &c., &c.'

'That is the chapter. It is like a portrait gallery; for in it we see likenesses of the good men of old—the Hebrew worthies—the noble family of believers. When we study these, we observe in them all a striking likeness to one another—one feature especially, marks them all as belonging to one family. Can you tell me what it is?'

'It is faith,' Charlie replied.

'Faith is the one thing which distinguishes every member of the family of God. Without it we cannot be His children. Read verse 6.'

'"But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God, must believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."'

'That verse tells us both the necessity of faith, and what this precious faith is. The 13th verse makes the nature of faith still plainer.'

Charlie read, '"These all died in faith, not having received the promises; but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."'

'Abel and Enoch and Noah and Abraham, all died in faith. Though they died long, long before Christ Jesus came into the world, they believed the promises, and embraced Christ, and lived and died trusting in Him alone for salvation.'

'*What is faith in Jesus Christ?*'

'*Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation, as He is offered to us in the gospel.*'

'That answer is a scriptural and a beautiful definition of faith. If you study it along with the xi. of Hebrews, the meaning of faith will be very plain to you. Jesus is the gift of God *offered to us in the gospel.* When a gift is offered to us, what must we do to get it?'

'We don't do anything, mamma. We just take it, and thank our friend for giving it to us.'

'That is how we should *receive* the Lord Jesus. We should take Him as our Saviour, and say, Thanks be unto God for

His unspeakable gift. Faith receives Jesus, the gift of God. Read John i. 11, 12.'

'"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as *received* Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name."'

'Receiving Jesus, believing on Him, coming to Him, trusting in Him, all mean saving faith. Why is faith a *saving grace?*'

'Because it makes Jesus our own Saviour.'

'That is why faith saves. And faith is a *grace*, because it comes from God. "For by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast." You know whose work it is to *persuade and enable sinners to embrace Jesus Christ?*'

'It is the work of the Holy Spirit.'

'I will read you a story, which may help to explain this to you:—"When the late Rev. William Arnot was pastor of a church in Glasgow, he heard that a woman, whom he knew, was in trouble. She could not pay her debts, and she could not pay her rent: so he went round to her house, thinking he would help her. He knocked at the door, and listened, and thought he heard some one inside; so he knocked again, but no one came. He knocked the third time very loud, and listened, but did not hear any one; all was still. After waiting some time, he made a great noise, and at last left the house. A few days after, he met the woman in the street, and he said to her, 'I was round at your house the other day. I heard you were in trouble, and could not pay your rent, and I went to help you.' The woman said, 'Was that you? I was in the house at the time, but I thought it was the landlord come for the rent; and as I had not got the money, I kept the door locked.'"'

'Now tell me what that woman would have done, had she believed that it was a kind friend who was knocking at her door?'

'She would have opened it in a moment.'

'That is how faith changes the heart. The sinner in his natural state thinks that Jesus is his enemy, and that He comes to take away his liberty and joy; and, while he continues in this mind, he keeps the door of his heart fast barred against Him. But whenever he believes that Jesus is his best friend, who has come to pay his debt, and set him free from the law, he opens the door of his heart, and the King of Glory comes in, and brings light and peace and joy. This change of mind is conversion—the work of the Holy Spirit. Nellie, you remember a question you learned some time ago, *How doth the Spirit apply to us the redemption purchased by Christ?*'

'*The spirit applieth to us the redemption purchased by Christ, by working faith in us, and thereby uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling.*'

'To convert a sinner, is just to put faith in his heart. How can we ever please God, if we do not trust His Word? Who were those whom Jesus commended most highly, when He was on earth?'

'The centurion was one,' said Charlie.

'The Syrophenician woman,' added Nellie.

'Mary, who broke the box of ointment, and poured it on His head,' said little Alice.

'It was the strong faith of each one of these, which so pleased Jesus.'

'I know that it was the centurion's faith, and the Syrophenician woman's faith; but I thought it was Mary's *love* which Jesus commended.'

'No doubt Mary's love pleased Jesus; but it was her trong faith which produced her love. It was because she elieved what Jesus had told her concerning His death, that he brought her costly offering. There can be no love to esus, where there is no faith in His death.'

My faith looks up to Thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary,
 Saviour Divine:
Now hear me when I pray;
Take all my guilt away;
Oh let me from this day
 Be wholly Thine!

May Thy rich grace impart
Strength to my fainting heart,
 My zeal inspire;
As Thou hast died for me,
Oh may my love to Thee
Pure, warm, and changeless be,
 A living fire.

While life's dark maze I tread,
And griefs around me spread,
 Be Thou my guide;
Bid darkness turn to day,
Wipe sorrow's tears away,
Nor let me ever stray
 From Thee aside.

When ends life's transient dream,
When death's cold sullen stream
 Shall o'er me roll,
Blest Saviour! then, in love,
Fear and distrust remove;
O bear me safe above,
 A ransomed soul.

XLIV.

REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE.

'GODLY SORROW WORKETH REPENTANCE TO SALVATION NOT TO BE REPENTED OF: BUT THE SORROW OF THE WORLD WORKETH DEATH.'

87. *What is repentance unto life?*

Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavour after, new obedience.

'MAMMA, why does repentance come after faith, in the Catechism? I thought we should repent first, and then believe in Jesus.'

'That is a very common idea, but it is a great mistake; for it is faith in the Lord Jesus which produces true repentance. The answer itself tells you this. Repeat it, Nellie.'

'*Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavour after, new obedience.*'

'That answer states very clearly what the Bible teaches concerning true repentance. The very words employed are taken from Scripture. If you read the verse where the expression, *repentance unto life*, occurs, you will see that it is the result of faith in Jesus Christ, and therefore a *saving grace*. There can be no life, no salvation, apart from faith in *Jesus*. Read Acts xi. 18.'

'"When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted *repentance unto life.*"'

'What things had Peter been telling the apostles and brethren?'

'He had been telling them all about Cornelius sending men to Joppa for him, and how he had gone with them to Cæsarea, and preached Jesus to them.'

'Yes. And it was because these Gentiles had believed on Jesus and received the Holy Spirit, that the apostles knew that God had granted to them *repentance unto life.* The word *repent,* means to turn; and every one who believes in Jesus, turns from sin. *Apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ,* you know, is faith in Jesus. *A true sense of sin,* without faith, will not turn sinners to God. Read the 21st verse of the same chapter, Charlie.'

'"And the hand of the Lord was with them; and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord."'

'These Grecians showed the sincerity of their faith, by turning from sin unto God; and when Barnabas came, he "exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord." Repentance is the life-work of the believer. Can you tell me why this question is, *What is repentance unto life?* and not merely, What is repentance?'

'Because there is another kind of repentance, mamma; Judas repented.'

'That is the reason. Judas had *a true sense of his sin,* but no *apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ;* and so his repentance was not unto life, but unto death.'

'He went and hanged himself, mamma.'

'That was because he had no faith in the Lord Jesus. How different was Peter's repentance.'

'Peter went out and wept bitterly.'

'Peter thought of the love of Jesus; and *with grief and hatred of his sin, turned from it*, and his whole after life was a life of new obedience. True sorrow for sin flows from looking to Jesus. A passage in Zechariah very plainly describes repentance. Read Zech. xii. 10.'

'"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born."'

'That is the godly sorrow which worketh repentance to salvation. Two or three years ago, a Roman Catholic priest was turned from his errors by listening to the text, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." His mother had taught him these words when he was a little boy, and hearing them recalled her instructions to his memory, and brought him to the feet of Jesus. On his dying bed he often mourned over his departure from his mother's God. His sorrow was very deep. One evening he said to a young friend who was with him, "Ah, Charlie, my boy, it's *forgiven sin* that breaks a fellow down. The sense of *unpardoned sin* will bruise and torture, and leave scars on one's heart for life; but to see the Lord Jesus look into my face, to feel His blessed eye looking into my heart, and hear Him say, 'I have died for thee; I have forgiven all thy sins, freely and for ever,' Charlie, Charlie, I think, *even in heaven*, I *must* weep, when we sing, '*He was slain for us!*'"'*

'Whether do you think the prodigal in the parable would be most sorry for his sin, before he rose and came to his father, or after his father had received him?'

* 'The Dying Priest and the Cleansing Blood.'

'O, mamma, he would be far more sorry after, when he saw how kind and good his father was to him.'

'And how would he shew his father that he was really sorry?'

'He would never leave his father any more.'

'And he would always try to do the things that would please his father,' Charlie added.

'That would be the best proof that he was really sorry for the past. Do you think his father would have liked to have seen him always mourning over his sins?'

'No, mamma; his father was glad because he had come back, and he wished him to be glad too.'

'And when we return to our Father in heaven, He wishes us to be glad, and to serve Him joyfully. This is the *new obedience* which we must, *with full purpose* of heart, follow after.'

'But, mamma, how can we be glad and sorry for our sins at the same time?'

'Jesus puts joy into the hearts of His own people, even when they are sorrowful. He enables them to say, "O Lord, I will praise Thee: though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortedst me. I will delight myself in Thy commandments, which I have loved."'

'I've found a joy in sorrow,
A secret balm for pain;
A beautiful to-morrow
Of sunshine after rain.

.

'O'er tears of soft contrition
I've seen a rainbow light;
A glory and fruition
So near!—yet out of sight.'

XLV.

THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT.

'FOR OUR GOSPEL CAME NOT UNTO YOU IN WORD ONLY, BUT ALSO IN POWER, AND IN THE HOLY GHOST, AND IN MUCH ASSURANCE.'

88. *What are the outward means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption?*

The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption, are His ordinances; especially the word, sacraments, and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.

89. *How is the word made effectual to salvation?*

The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching of the word, an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort, through faith, unto salvation.

'I love to tell the story
Of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and His glory,
Of Jesus and His love.'

'I LIKE that hymn, mamma,' said little Alice.

'It is a very beautiful one. We should all love to tell the Old, Old Story, of Jesus and His love. Do you know why?'

'Because it is the best story ever was told.'

'Because it is the story that saves sinners,' Charlie added.

'It is the best story. And Christ's people love to tell it, because it has saved them; and they wish it to save others. What command did Jesus give His disciples before He *ascended to* heaven?'

'He said unto them, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."'

'What is the gospel? Harry.'

'It is the good tidings of great joy that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.'

'Yes. The story of Jesus and His love is the gospel; and to preach the gospel, is just to tell that story—to proclaim

"That wonderful redemption,
God's remedy for sin."

'Jesus saves every one who comes to Him; but those who never heard of Jesus, cannot believe on Him. Those who listen to the gospel, and believe in Jesus, are saved. The story of the cross is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth. You have learned the answer to the question, *How is the word made effectual to salvation?* Repeat it, Nellie.'

'*The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching of the word, an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort, through faith unto salvation.*'

'Jesus Christ Himself preached many times at Jerusalem; but His sad complaint was, "Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life." Instead of believing in Jesus, the Jews hated Him, and delivered Him to Pilate.'

'They cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him, crucify Him!"'

'On the day of Pentecost Peter preached to the same Jews, and three thousand were converted. Why was this?'

'Because the Holy Spirit had come.'

'That is the reason. Peter told the story of Jesus; and

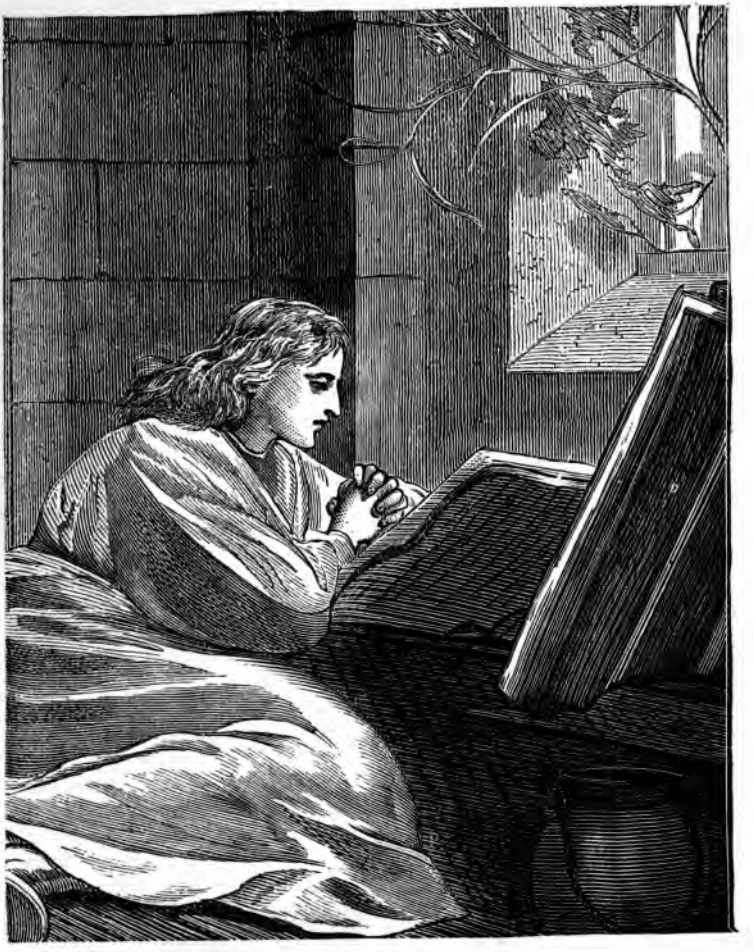
the Holy Spirit made His preaching *an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners.* The Word and the Spirit are both needed to bring sinners to the Saviour. Read what Jesus says in John vi. 63.'

'"It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."'

'The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit; but it is a quickening, a life-giving sword. It gives life to the sinner, by killing the hatred and unbelief in his heart. One day a man filled his pockets with stones, and joined the crowds who had assembled to hear John Wesley preach the gospel. Before throwing the stones at the preacher, he thought he would listen a few minutes to hear what he had got to say. He did so, and the words he heard pierced his soul, and turned him to God. His enmity was slain by the sword of the Spirit. At the close of the service, the man came to Mr Wesley in deep anxiety, saying, "I came to break your head, but you have broken my heart." "The Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword."'

'I read about a lady who went to one of Mr Moody's meetings, just to mock and laugh at him. When she went in, Mr Sankey was singing "Almost persuaded." She could not forget the words, "Almost, *but lost.*" Night and day she thought she heard "that" sad, sad, bitter wail, "Almost, *but lost*"; and she got no rest till she came to Jesus.'

'That lady afterwards came and told her friends that she had been, not *almost*, but *altogether*, persuaded to be a Christian. When the Spirit converts a sinner, it is always by *means* of some portion of Scripture. Many a sinner has been drawn to Jesus by His own blessed words, "Him that cometh *to Me, I* will in no wise cast out." Come unto Me, all ye



Timothy.

that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And what does the Word of God do for the sinner after he is converted?'

'The answer says, *building them up in holiness and comfort, &c.*'

'Those who have come to Jesus, need to be *built up*, made strong in the Lord. Their life-work is to become like Jesus; and we can only learn of Him, by studying His example in His Word. Read Col. ii. 6, 7.'

'"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him; rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."'

'The Word of God is not only the sword which pierces the heart of sinners, but also the food which nourishes and strengthens the new-born soul. "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby." The work of the Christian ministry, is rightly to divide the Word of truth. You know what Paul wrote to Timothy about the Scriptures?'

'I know, mamma,' said little Alice. 'He wrote, "From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus."'

'Yes. Timothy had been taught the Holy Scriptures by his mother and his grandmother, when he was a little boy; and, when he was a preacher of the gospel, Paul wrote, exhorting him to continue to study the Scriptures, that he might be a good minister of Jesus Christ.'

'Some ministers do not preach what the Bible tells us, mamma,' said Charlie.

'No, my dear. Christ Jesus Himself told us that false teachers would come; and that we may beware of such,

we must diligently compare the instructions we hear, wit Word of God. You remember what the Jews of Berea commended for doing. Acts xvii. 11.'

'I have found the place, mamma.' And Nellie '"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in they received the word with all readiness of mind, and sea the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so."'

'These Bereans listened to the preaching of Paul Silas, and compared what they heard with the Script "Therefore many of them believed." The Holy Spirit b both *the reading* and *the preaching of the Word* to conversion. And He does the same now.

"The Spirit breathes upon the word,
And brings the truth to sight;
Precepts and promises afford
A sanctifying light.

A glory gilds the sacred page,
Majestic, like the sun;
It gives a light to every age,
It gives, but borrows none.

The Hand that gave it still supplies
The gracious light and heat;
His truths upon the nations rise;
They rise, but never set.

Let everlasting thanks be Thine,
For such a bright display
As makes a world of darkness shine
With beams of heavenly day.

My soul rejoices to pursue
The steps of Him I love,
Till glory breaks upon my view
In brighter worlds above."'

XLVI.

HEAR, LEARN, KEEP, AND DO.

'THAT ON THE GOOD GROUND ARE THEY, WHICH IN AN HONEST AND GOOD HEART, HAVING HEARD THE WORD, KEEP IT, AND BRING FORTH FRUIT WITH PATIENCE.'

90. *How is the word to be read and heard, that it may become effectual to salvation?*

That the word may become effectual to salvation, we must attend thereunto with diligence, preparation, and prayer; receive it with faith and love, lay it up in our hearts, and practise it in our lives.

'MAMMA, what does *become effectual to salvation*, mean?' asked Charlie, when he had read this question.

'It means that it may have the effect of saving us. God's Word is the medicine He has given to heal our souls. The Scriptures are the leaves of the tree of life for the healing of the nations. Read Psalm cvii. 20.'

'"He sent His word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions."'

'God's Word was written to heal the soul, and it never fails to heal those who use it aright.' It is a powerful medicine, and must produce some effect. Does it save all who read and hear it?'

'O no, mamma. Some people know the Bible quite well, who are not good people at all.'

'That is why we should be very careful how we read and hear. If the Word is not *effectual to salvation*, if it does not heal the soul, it will destroy it. Read what Paul says of his ministry.' (2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.)

'"For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life."'

'The Word is like one of those powerful remedies which must be used with great care, or it will kill instead of curing. Peter tells us of some in his day who used the Scriptures, so as to destroy their own souls (2 Pet. iii. 16); and many still wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction. It is, therefore, very important that we should remember the Saviour's command, "Take heed how ye hear." When a physician prescribes a medicine, what does he usually give along with it?'

'He gives directions how we are to use it.'

'Yes. And if the medicine is of a kind which may prove hurtful, he is careful to give very minute directions regarding it. The Great Physician, along with His Word, gives us plain instructions for its use. What would you think of a patient who never minded the physician's directions?'

'That would be very foolish, mamma; perhaps the medicine would kill him.'

'Those who neglect the directions God has given us regarding the soul's medicine, are still more foolish. Four of these directions are given in the answer you have learned. Repeat it, Nellie.'

'*That the word may become effectual to salvation, we must attend thereunto with diligence, preparation, and prayer, receive it with faith and love, lay it up in our hearts, and practise it in our lives.*'

'Do you know what it is, to *attend thereunto with diligence?* Charlie.'

'That means to read the Bible every day, and go to church every Sabbath.'

'And what is *preparation?*'

'It is to stop thinking of other things, and pray to God.'

'We should read the Bible every morning and evening; and I think you all know a prayer which you should offer when you do so.'

'I know the one you mean, mamma. It is, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law?"'

'What is, to *receive it with faith and love?*'

'That is, to believe that it is really God's message to us; and to be glad that Jesus loves us.'

'It is to be like Mary, who sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word; or like him who said, "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!"'

'But, mamma, what is it, to *lay it up in our hearts?*'

'That is to keep it in our memory; not to forget it, but to hide it in our hearts. We should commit Christ's words to memory, and keep His sayings in our heart. (Luke ii. 51.) We must not forget the last direction. What is it?'

'*Practise it in our lives.*'

'What is that? Charlie.'

'It is to do what the Bible tells us.'

'That is the way to get good from the Bible, to do what it tells us. Jesus says, If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. If we would be Christ's disciples, we must HEAR, LEARN, KEEP, and Do His Word. These four little words, all found in one verse, tell us our whole duty to the Word of God. They correspond to the four directions in the Catechism. Read the verse, Charlie.'

'"And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep, and do them."' (Deut. v. 1.)

'Mr Muller, of Bristol, in an address to young converts said,

"Read the Word of God regularly through. As an earthly will is always read through with great care, so God's will ought to be read entirely through with reverence and godly fear. . . . In forty-six years I have read my Bible through a hundred times; yet it is always fresh and new when I begin it again."

'If you wish to become like Jesus, you must love the Bible. It is the mirror which shews us His image. I will tell you of a blind girl who valued the Word of God as we all ought to do.

'A colporteur visited the cottage where she lived, became interested in the blind girl, and got her taught to read with her fingers the books prepared for the blind. He got a Bible for her, which she read with intense delight. She would sit hour after hour reading her Bible, and really meditated upon it day and night. Her father was poor; and, as soon as the blind girl was old enough, she was obliged to go to work in the fields; but she expected she would still be able to read her highly prized treasure in the evenings. But in a short time the skin of her fingers got hardened, and she could not feel the letters. She cut off part of the hardened skin, and felt the letters; but it soon hardened again, and she knew not what to do. To be unable to read her Bible, was a sore trial to the poor girl. With a sorrowful heart and a tearful eye, she took the Book in her arms, to give it a farewell kiss; when, to her great joy, she discovered that she could read it with her lips.'

'And did she read it with her lips after that, mamma?' asked little Alice.

'Yes, my dear; she read it with her lips, and found it sweeter than honey and the honeycomb.

"Holy Bible, Book Divine,
Precious treasure, thou art mine."'

XLVII.

CONFESSING CHRIST.

'WHOSOEVER THEREFORE SHALL CONFESS ME BEFORE MEN, HIM WILL I CONFESS ALSO BEFORE MY FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN.'

91. *How do the sacraments become effectual means of salvation?*

The sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them, or in him that doth administer them; but only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of his Spirit in them that by faith receive them.

92. *What is a sacrament?*

A sacrament is an holy ordinance instituted by Christ; wherein, by sensible signs, Christ, and the benefits of the new covenant, are represented, sealed, and applied to believers.

93 *Which are the sacraments of the New Testament?*

The Sacraments of the New Testament are, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper.

'WHY do we call the Lord's Supper, the Sacrament, mamma?' asked Charlie, after he had seen that ordinance dispensed.

'*Sacramentum* is the Latin word for the oath of allegiance taken by the Roman soldiers. It came to be applied to the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, because when we receive baptism, we enlist as soldiers of the Lord Jesus, and take the oath of allegiance to Him, and every time we partake of the Lord's Supper we renew this oath.'

'Is Baptism a Sacrament?' asked little Alice.

'Yes. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the New Testament Sacraments. Do you know what were the Old Testament Sacraments?'

'Circumcision and the Passover.'

'Circumcision was the ordinance by which the Israelites became members of the Jewish church,—and the Passover the memorial of their deliverance from Egypt; and when the Jews observed these ordinances, they took the same oath of allegiance to the Lord their King, that we do when we observe Baptism and the Lord's Supper.'

'But, mamma,' said Nellie, 'surely a Sacrament means something more than an oath of allegiance.'

'Baptism and the Lord's Supper do signify something more, though the name Sacrament only refers to the oath. *What is a Sacrament?*'

'*A Sacrament is an holy ordinance instituted by Christ; wherein, by sensible signs, Christ, and the benefits of the new covenant, are represented, sealed, and applied to believers.*'

'*A sensible sign* is something which we can see and touch. What *sensible signs* are used in the Sacraments?'

'Water in Baptism, and bread and wine in the Lord's Supper.'

'The water, and the bread and wine, are emblems of Christ, and of the blessings which He bestows upon those who receive Him.'

'What is *sealed*, mamma?' asked Charlie.

'The king's seal, attached to a decree, confirms or makes it sure. Read Esther viii. 8.'

'"Write ye also for the Jews, as it liketh you, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring; for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, *may no man* reverse."'

'His Word is the writing by which Christ confers on believers *the benefits of the new covenant.* Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the seals which confirm the decree. Circumcision was a seal of the covenant God made with Abraham. Read Rom. iv. 11, 12.'

'"And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which, he had, yet being uncircumcised, &c."'

'This passage shews us how the Sacraments benefit the believer. They confirm his faith in the word of God, and so give him strong consolation.'

'*How do the Sacraments become effectual means of salvation?*'

'*The Sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them or in him that doth administer them; but only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of His Spirit in them that by faith receive them.*'

'This answer warns us against thinking that the mere sprinkling of water in Baptism, or the mere eating and drinking of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, can do any good to the soul. These signs have no virtue, or power, in themselves—neither has the minister who dispenses them. How then may we profit by the Sacraments?'

'The answer says, *only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of His Spirit in them that by faith receive them.*'

'But what is it to receive the Sacraments by faith?'

'I don't quite know what it means, mamma.'

'When a parent receives baptism for his child, is it faith to believe that this rite has made the babe a child of God and an heir of glory?'

'I am sure, papa didn't believe that, when our baby was baptised; for he told us all to ask God to make baby one of Jesus' lambs.'

'Christ instituted the Sacraments as seals to confirm His own gracious covenant, "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath." To receive the Sacraments by faith, is to observe them in obedience to Christ's command, and by doing so, to set our own seal to the covenant of grace—to give our oath that we receive Christ as our own Saviour and King. There is a passage in Neh. ix. 38, which will shew you what we do when we receive the Sacraments by faith. Read the verse, Charlie.'

'"And because of all this we make a sure covenant, and write it; and our princes, Levites, and priests, seal unto it."'

'When we observe the Sacraments, we publicly confess that we are the Lord's people. We say before the world what the Israelites said to Joshua, The Lord our God will we serve, and His voice will we obey. Would it do us any good to say this, if we did not really wish to serve Christ?'

'O no. That would be a great sin; for it would be telling a lie.'

'To observe the Sacraments, if we have not faith in Christ, is to swear falsely. We must first believe in the Lord Jesus, and then confess Him before men.'

'The following covenant was drawn up by the Rev. Philip Henry, for the use of his children, who repeated it to him every Sabbath evening.'

'"I take God the Father to be my chief end and highest good. I take God the Son to be my Prince and Saviour. I take God, the Holy Ghost, to be my Sanctifier, Teacher, Guide, and Comforter. I take the word of God to be the rule of all my actions. I take the people of God, to be my *people, in* all conditions. I do likewise devote and dedicate

myself to God, my whole self, all I am, all I have, all I can do. And this I do deliberately, sincerely, freely, and for ever.

'"So say, and so do," he would sometimes add, "and you are made for ever."'

'Jesus! and shall it ever be,
A mortal man ashamed of Thee,
Ashamed of Thee, whom angels praise,
Whose glories shine through endless days!

Ashamed of Jesus! just as soon
Let midnight blush to think of noon;
'Tis midnight with my soul till He,
Bright Morning Star, bids darkness flee.

Ashamed of Jesus! that dear Friend
On whom my hopes of heaven depend!
No! when I blush, be this my shame,
That I so feebly love His name.

Ashamed of Jesus! yes I may,
When I've no sins to wash away,
No tear to wipe, no joy to crave,
No fears to quell, no soul to save.

Till then—nor is my boasting vain—
Till then, I boast a Saviour slain!
And O may this my glory be,
That Christ is not ashamed of me! Amen.'

XLVIII.

BAPTISM.

'GO YE THEREFORE, AND TEACH ALL NATIONS, BAPTISING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST.'

94. *What is baptism?*

Baptism is a sacrament, wherein the washing with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, doth signify and seal our ingrafting into Christ, and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord's.

95. *To whom is baptism to be administered?*

Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church, till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him; but the infants of such as are members of the visible church are to be baptized.

'MAMMA, what does *our ingrafting into Christ*, mean?'

'Did you ever see a gardener grafting trees?'

'Yes. I have seen the gardener cut a graft from one tree, and put it into another tree; and he did this in such a way that the graft became really a part of the tree.'

'Jesus is the true vine, and believers are the branches; but they are not so by nature. They grow on the degenerate plant of the wild vine of human nature, and the heavenly gardener takes these branches and grafts them into Christ, the true vine. Thus they receive a new life, becoming one with Christ. Can you tell me when sinners are ingrafted into Christ? Is it when they are baptised?'

'O no, mamma. It is when they believe in Jesus. Baptism *is* only a sign.'

'Why does *the washing with water* in baptism, represent our *engrafting into Christ?*'

'Because it is by washing in the blood of Jesus, that sinners are made children of God.'

'We shall read a few passages which make the meaning of baptism very plain. Read Titus iii. 5.'

'"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."'

Acts xxii. 16:—'"And now why tarriest thou? arise and be baptised, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."'

'These two passages show clearly that baptism represents regeneration—the washing away of sin. Paul had just been converted. His sins had been washed away in the blood of Jesus; and because he was now a believer in Jesus, Ananias bade him arise and be baptised, and so confess the Lord Jesus before men.'

'Why are people only baptised once, while they take the Lord's Supper a great many times?' asked little Alice.

'We are only baptised once, because baptism is the sign of the new birth. We can be born again only once. If once *ingrafted into Christ*, we can never be separated from Him.'

'Why does the minister say, "I baptise thee in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost?"'

'Christ Jesus commanded His disciples to do so, to teach us that the Three-One God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—becomes our covenant God in Christ, when we are washed in the blood of Jesus. His name is named upon us, when we are baptised, and we promise to be His people.'

'But, mamma, a *wee* baby can't promise to serve God,' said Charlie.

'No; but the child's parents promise for him. The Jewish parents were commanded to circumcise their little ones, when they were eight days old. Circumcision was the Old Testament ordinance which made the Jews members of the visible church, and was to them a sign of the covenant, as baptism is to us. Read Col. ii. 11, 12.'

'"In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God who hath raised Him from the dead."'

'That passage clearly shews that circumcision and baptism are both symbols of conversion, and would seem clearly to imply that baptism has taken the place of circumcision.'

'But, mamma, what good does it do the little babies to baptise them, when they do not know anything about it?'

'What good did it do the infants, when Jesus took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them? They did not know who Jesus was.'

'If Jesus blessed them, it must have done them good,' said Alice.

'And is not Jesus as willing to bless the little children now, as He was then? If Jesus is still able and willing to give the little ones the blessing signified by baptism, surely parents may bring their little ones to Him in that ordinance. He who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not," will not rebuke believing parents for bringing their little ones to Him, to receive His blessing.'

'Does Jesus bless the little babies now when they are baptised?' asked Charlie.

'*No doubt* Jesus baptises many babes with the Holy Spirit,

for He takes thousands of them to be with Himself in glory; and we know that the youngest child cannot enter heaven, unless washed in the blood of Jesus.'

'Sometimes babies die who have not been baptised. What will become of them?' asked Nellie.

'Jesus takes them to be with Him all the same. You know that it is not baptising with water, but baptising with the Holy Spirit, which saves the soul. Simon, the sorcerer, was baptised, and yet Peter said to him, "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right in the sight of God." Read Rom. ii. 28, 29.'

'"For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."'

'What should you pray for, when you see any one baptised?'

'The minister always prays, "Baptise the little ones with the Holy Spirit."'

'Yes. And we should join in this prayer, and remember our own *engagement to be the Lord's*. When David was an old man, he remembered that his parents had given him to God in his infancy, and he charged Solomon, his son, to remember and to fulfil his *engagement to be the Lord's*. David's charge to Solomon points out the obligation which our baptism has laid upon us. Read 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.'

'"And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind; for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts; if thou seek Him, He will be found of thee; but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off for ever."'

XLIX.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

'AS OFTEN AS YE EAT THIS BREAD, AND DRINK THIS CUP, YE DO SHEW THE LORD'S DEATH TILL HE COME.'

96. *What is the Lord's Supper?*

The Lord's Supper is a sacrament, wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, His death is shewed forth; and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of His body and blood, with all His benefits, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.

97. *What is required to the worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper?*

It is required of them that would worthily partake of the Lord's Supper, that they examine themselves of their knowledge to discern the Lord's body, of their faith to feed upon Him, of their repentance, love, and new obedience; lest, coming unworthily, they eat and drink judgment to themselves.

'WHY did the people eat bread and drink wine in the church to-day?' asked little Alice, on the evening of a Communion Sabbath.

'They did so in remembrance of Jesus, and in obedience to His dying command. What was the last command Jesus gave His disciples before He was led away to be crucified?'

'I know it, mamma,' said Charlie. 'It was, "This do in remembrance of Me."'

'Yes. Jesus had been eating the Passover with His disciples; and, while sitting at the table with them, He took

bread, and gave thanks and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, "This is My body, which is given for you; this do in remembrance of Me, &c." Thus Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, to be observed instead of the Passover.'

'Why was the Passover not to be observed any more, mamma?'

'You know what the Paschal Lamb typified?'

'It was a type of Jesus, the Lamb of God.'

'And when Jesus shed His own blood on the cross, this and all the other types of Him were fulfilled, and no longer needed.'

'But, mamma, the Passover was a memorial of the Israelites' deliverance from Egypt.'

'And the Lord's Supper is a memorial of the great deliverance of the Lord's people from the bondage of sin, when Jesus bought them with His own blood.'

'*What is the Lord's Supper?*'

'*The Lord's Supper is a Sacrament, wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, His death is shewed forth; and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of His body and blood, with all His benefits, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.*'

'What does, *His death is shewed forth*, mean?'

'It means that the observance of the Lord's Supper proclaims the free grace and dying love of the Lord Jesus. Read Exod. xii. 26, 27, and that passage will help you to understand it.' Charlie read:—

'"And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses."'

'One reason for the observance of the Passover, was to teach the children—to impress upon their hearts the Lord's goodness in saving them, when He destroyed the Egyptians. When children see the Lord's Supper observed, they ought, like the Jewish children, to ask what it means.'

'What does eating the bread mean, mamma?'

'We eat the bread and drink the wine—to signify that we live by faith on the Lord Jesus—that His death is the life of our souls, as bread is the life of our bodies.'

'The Roman Catholic priests say that the bread is really the body of Christ,' said Charlie.

'They try to make people believe that Christ's words, "This is My body," signify that the bread is really changed into the body of Christ, when the priest blesses it. But we know what Christ taught, when, in the same manner, He said, "I am the door; I am the true vine."'

'I am the door, means, I am the way to heaven; because a door is the way into a house.'

'And in the same way, This is My body, signifies, This bread, which I now break, represents My body which died on the cross for you.'

'A little Irish boy who had attended a Protestant School, when told by the priest that the bread was really the body of Christ, replied, "I read in my New Testament, This Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia (Gal. iv. 25.) Am I to believe that the maid in the kitchen is Mount Sinai?"'

'That was a very good reply.'

'It is *not after a corporal and carnal manner*—that is, not by merely eating and drinking—but by doing so in *faith*, that the Lord's Supper nourishes the soul.'

'Mamma, the answer says, *the worthy receivers*. I thought *nobody was* worthy.'

'No one is worthy. But every one who sincerely loves the Lord Jesus, is welcome, and is reckoned worthy for His sake. You can tell me now who those are that come *unworthily?*'

'Those who do not love Jesus, nor keep His commandments,' Nellie replied.

'Some persons come to the Lord's Table who have not chosen Him for their Lord and Master. Is this right?'

'No, mamma. For those who take the Lord's Supper, say they are His friends.'

'They not only say this, but they swear it openly and solemnly. To do so, if they do not sincerely desire to follow Jesus, is to come unworthily. To warn us against this sin, a command is given in 1 Cor. xi. 28. Read it, Charlie.'

'"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." What is it to "examine himself," mamma?'

'When your teacher examines you at school, what does he do?'

'He asks us a great many questions.'

'To examine ourselves, is to ask ourselves questions—to put, to our own hearts, the questions Jesus asks each of us. You know some of these. What did He ask Peter three times?'

'Jesus said to Peter three times, "Lovest thou Me?"'

'That is the question each one of us should ask ourselves; and Jesus tells us how we may know whether we really love Him or not. Read John xiv. 21.'

'"He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father, &c." Read also 1 John iv. 20.'

'"If a man say I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"'

'These passages shew us how we may know that we really love Christ. If we have reason to fear that His love is not in our hearts, our first duty is to go to Him for a new heart and a right spirit. Then, and not till then, may we come to His table. Who was it that sat at the Supper Table with Jesus unworthily?'

'It was Judas, mamma. He was going to betray Jesus.'

'The story of Judas is a very sad one. When Jesus said, "One of you shall betray Me," did each one say, "Is it Judas?"'

'No, mamma. Each one said, "Lord, is it I?"'

'That was true self-examination. Each disciple feared lest he himself should be guilty of this great sin, and felt as David did when he prayed, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."'

'Hark! my soul, it is the Lord;
'Tis thy Saviour, hear His word;
Jesus speaks, and speaks to thee:
"Say, poor sinner, Lov'st thou Me?"'



L.

PRAYER.

'HITHERTO HAVE YE ASKED NOTHING IN MY NAME; ASK, AND YE SHALL RECEIVE, THAT YOUR JOY MAY BE FULL.'

98. *What is Prayer?*

Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God for things agreeable to His will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of His mercies.

'TELL me in your own words, Charlie, what *offering up of our desires to God*, means?'

'It means asking God to give us what we want.'

'That is real prayer. God alone is the hearer of prayer; and whenever we pray, we should remember that we are speaking to the Great God who made heaven and earth. How wonderful that He should condescend to listen to our feeble prayers!'

'I know a verse about that, mamma,' said Alice.

> '"God is in heaven: can He hear
> A little prayer like mine?
> Yes, thoughtful child, thou need'st not fear,
> He listeneth to thine."'

'Yes. God listens when we pray in spirit and in truth. But if we merely *say* prayers morning and evening, will God listen to us?'

'No, mamma. We must really wish the things we ask from God, or we do not pray at all. Papa told us, that to say our prayer without thinking about it, was taking God's name in vain.'

'Papa read us a story about an old man who, for seventy years, never once forgot to say the prayer his mother had taught him when he was three years old, and yet he had never prayed at all,' said Charlie.

'How could that be?'

'It was because he was not converted till he was seventy-three years old. Before that time he used to boast that he never ommitted his prayer morning and evening; but after his conversion he would often say, "I am the old man who said prayers for seventy years, but all that time never prayed *at all.*'

'He learned, when taught by the Holy Spirit, that merely to repeat a form of prayer is not to pray. We must offer up our heart's desires to God.'

'Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed,
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burthen of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.'

'There may be real prayer when not a word is spoken. It is not the words, but the lifting up of the heart to God, that is prayer. But what things must we desire when we pray?'

'The answer says, *things agreeable to His will.*'

'When we pray, we must pray for right things. Read 1 John v. 15.' And Charlie read:—

'"And this is the confidence that we have in Him that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us."'

'Another passage (Rom. viii. 26, 27) tells us that we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. We need the Holy Spirit to teach us to pray, to put right desires into our hearts. Can you tell me any instance of persons displeasing God by asking wrong things from Him?'

'God was angry when the Israelites sought flesh to eat, and He sent them quails which brought the plague.'

Theirs was earnest prayer for the wrong thing. They should have been satisfied with the manna God had given them. God was displeased with their murmurings, and in anger gave them their desire. Read Psalm cvi. 15, Nellie.'

'"And He gave them their request: but sent leanness into their soul."'

'You can tell me now some of the things which we know are agreeable to God's will, and which we should always pray for.'

'The Lord's Prayer teaches us the things we should pray for.'

'Yes, in a few short sentences that model prayer sets before us the great things for which we should pray. We shall read Luke xi., and it will shew you how Jesus taught His disciples to pray, and encouraged them to ask the Holy Spirit. Read verse 13.'

'"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"'

'In the parallel passage in Matt. vii. 11, the words are not the same. What is the difference, Charlie?'

'Instead of *the Holy Spirit* it is *good things*.'

'To pray for the Holy Spirit, is to pray for good things; because when the Holy Spirit comes into the heart, He fills it with good things. Some of these good things are named in Gal. v. 22, 23. Read the passage, Nellie.'

'"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."'

'Now we come to another point, without which prayer is of no avail. What is it?'

'*In the name of Christ* is the next part of the answer.'

'Yes. No one can come to God but by Jesus. It is because He died for our sins, that we are invited to come to the throne of grace and receive forgiveness.'

'Is that why we say, For Christ's sake, mamma?' asked Alice.

'Yes. The words, For Christ's sake, or in the name of Christ, signify, because He died for us; and when we pray, *we must* confess our sins.'

'*With confession of our sins*, is the next part of the answer.'

'There can be no real prayer without confession of sin. Jesus taught His disciples this by the prayer of the publican.'

'I know his prayer, mamma. It was "God be merciful to me a sinner."'

'It is only when we feel our own sinfulness that we can pray acceptably; for then we feel our need of Jesus.'

'The prodigal son prayed, "Father, I have sinned."'

'True prayer is a cry for mercy. The Pharisee did not pray at all, because he felt no need for mercy.'

'Was it wrong of him to thank God that he was not a wicked man, mamma?'

'In prayer we ought thankfully to acknowledge God's mercy. But this was not what the Pharisee did. He trusted in himself that he was righteous, and despised others. He sought no forgiveness, because he confessed no sin.'

'Can you tell me, now, the things which make real prayer?'

'The first thing is, that it must be offered to God,' said Nellie.

'The next is, that it must come from our heart,' added Charlie.

'And we must pray for good things,' said Alice.

'We must pray in the name of Jesus, mamma.'

'You have named four things: two more are named in the Catechism.'

'*Confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of God's mercies.*'

'Can you tell me, which part of the temple worship represented prayer?'

'Burning incense on the golden altar.'

'The incense was made of four different sweet spices, equally mingled together like the adoration, petitions, confessions, and

thanksgivings, we offer in prayer. These were brought to the golden altar, and there offered by the priest. What did this represent?'

'The priest represented Jesus, and the fire from the golden altar represented His death, and the smoke going up, our prayers ascending to Him.'

'David understood this ceremony when he wrote—

"As incense let my prayer be
Directed in Thine eyes;
And the uplifting of my hands
As th' evening sacrifice."

The burning of incense teaches us much concerning prayer. It points out special times for prayer. Read Exo. xxx. 7, 8.'

'"And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning; when he dresseth the lamps he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord, throughout your generations."'

'Incense could only be offered on the golden altar. This reminds us that prayer can only be offered through Jesus; and it was offered every morning and evening, to teach that prayer should never be omitted. Read Rev. viii. 3, 4.'

'"And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints, &c."'

'O Thou by whom we come to God,
The Life, the Truth, the Way,
The path of prayer Thyself hast trod,
Lord, teach us how to pray.'

LI.

FORMS OF PRAYER.

'AS HE WAS PRAYING IN A CERTAIN PLACE, WHEN HE CEASED, ONE OF HIS DISCIPLES SAID UNTO HIM, LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY.'

99. *What rule hath God given for our direction in prayer?*

The whole word of God is of use to direct us in prayer; but the special rule of direction is that form of prayer which Christ taught His disciples, commonly called THE LORD'S PRAYER.

'MAMMA, what is a *form of prayer?* This answer calls the Lord's Prayer *a form of prayer;* and I don't know what that means.'

'Written words suitable for being offered up in prayer, are called forms of prayer.'

'Is "Jesus, tender Shepherd," a form of prayer?'

'Yes. And a very beautiful one it is. "Our Father which art in heaven, &c.," is a form of prayer; because Jesus taught His disciples these words when they asked Him to teach them to pray. On another occasion, when Jesus was warning His disciples against saying long prayers like the heathen, He said to them, "After this manner therefore pray ye, Our Father." Can you tell me any other forms of prayer given in the Bible?'

'There are a great many prayers in the Bible, mamma. The psalms are full of prayers.'

'Yes, Nellie. There are many prayers in the Bible, especially in the psalms; but there are very few forms of

prayer. You will understand the difference when you look at some of these. Read Deut. xxi. 7, 8.'

'I have found it.' And Charlie read:—

'"And they shall answer and say, Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it. Be merciful, O Lord, unto Thy people Israel, whom Thou hast redeemed, and lay not innocent blood unto Thy people of Israel's charge."'

'That was the form of prayer God gave to the Israelites to be used when any person was found slain in the land, and the murderer was not known. In Num. vi. 24-26, you find the form of prayer which the priests were commanded to use when blessing the people. Read it, Nellie.'

'"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."'

'The words which precede this prayer are very like the words of Jesus: "After this manner pray ye." The verse before is, "Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel."

'These introductory words shew that the prayer which follows is a form. Most of the prayers in the Bible are not forms, but prayers offered in the words which the Holy Spirit breathed at the time they were uttered. The only form of prayer Jesus taught His disciples, is that beginning, "Our Father which art in heaven."

'In this prayer Jesus does not mention His own name, though He afterwards taught His disciples to ask every blessing for His sake only. His own words are: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in *My name,* He will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked

nothing in My name." (John xvi. 23-24.) The disciples did not fully understand the meaning of the expression, *in My name*, or, *for My sake*, till after Jesus died and rose again.'

'Should we always pray the Lord's prayer rather than any other words, mamma?'

'We should often pray in these beautiful words; though we know from other parts of Scripture, that Jesus did not give us this form to prevent us from praying in our own words, but rather to teach us for what things we ought to pray. Jesus' disciples often prayed in words taken from other portions of Scripture. Read Acts iv. 24-30.'

'"And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, Thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is, &c."'

'That is the prayer Peter and John prayed when they got out of prison.'

'The apostles prayed in words which expressed the need they felt at that moment. There is another prayer spoken by Jesus which we should study very carefully. It is not a form, but it is, pre-eminently, The Lord's Prayer.'

'You mean the prayer in the 17th chapter of John, mamma?'

'Yes. That wonderful prayer teaches us what Jesus is now doing for us in heaven, and what are His desires for us. It is sometimes called the Intercessory Prayer, because, in it, Jesus pleads for His people. What are the things He asks for them?'

'One is that they may be kept from the evil that is in the world.'

'Another is that they might love one another.'

'Yes. That is the meaning of the petition, That they all may be one.'

'And Jesus prayed that His people might be with Him in heaven,' added Charlie.

'These are the good things Jesus asks for His people, the things we should ask for ourselves.'

'But, mamma, the Catechism says, *The whole word of God is of use to direct us in prayer.* How can that be?'

'Because God speaks to us in His word, and we speak to Him by prayer. David says in Psalm xxvii. 8: "When Thou saidst, Seek ye My face; my heart said unto Thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek."'

'Papa's prayer at worship is always like the chapter he reads,' said Nellie.

'The way to get profit from reading the Bible, is to turn the portions we read into prayer. When Nathan brought him God's wonderful promise, David immediately turned it into prayer. (2 Sam. vii.) In his prayer at the dedication of the temple, Solomon referred to the same gracious promise, pleading it with God. "And now, O God of Israel, let Thy word, I pray Thee, be verified, which Thou spakest unto Thy servant David my father." (1 Kings viii. 26).'

'Had we time to study that prayer of Solomon's, you would see that it is composed, almost entirely, of passages from the earlier books of the Bible. The 119th psalm is specially useful for teaching us how to turn the precepts of God's word into prayers. The fourth verse is, "Thou hast commanded us to keep Thy precepts diligently." And what immediately follows?'

'It is this prayer, mamma: "O that my ways were directed to keep Thy statutes!"'

'The whole psalm is the pouring out of the believer's heart to God in answer to precepts and promises written in the *Word.*'

'But, mamma, is the Lord's prayer the best one in the Bible for us to pray?'

'No other words can possibly be better than *that form of prayer which Christ taught His disciples,*—a prayer so framed as to be suitable at all times. But it is plain from the many other prayers inspired by the Holy Spirit, that the words of the Lord's prayer were never designed to be the only words in which we should offer up our prayers. We should study the Lord's prayer constantly, and learn from this perfect model how to pray; but we must beware of repeating it as a mere form.'

'A missionary from China tells us that on one occasion, when visiting a heathen temple there, he saw a curious machine. On enquiring what it was, he learned that it was a Tartar praying mill. To save themselves the trouble of repeating their prayers over and over again, as the Roman Catholics do, the Chinese got a written form of prayer fixed to the roller of this machine; and every time it was turned round, they reckoned that a prayer was said.'

'O, mamma, how could they be so foolish?'

'They are heathens who had been taught in childhood to offer these "useless prayers to blocks of wood and stone." Is it not far worse when those who have been carefully instructed in the knowledge of the true God, and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent, repeat words of prayer, while their hearts are far from Him? "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth."'

LII.

THE MODEL PRAYER.

'OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN, HALLOWED BE THY NAME. THY KINGDOM COME. THY WILL BE DONE IN EARTH, AS IT IS IN HEAVEN. GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD. AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS, AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS. AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL: FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, AND THE POWER, AND THE GLORY, FOR EVER. AMEN.'

100. *What doth the preface of the Lord's Prayer teach us?*

The preface of the Lord's prayer (which is, OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN,) teacheth us to draw near to God with all holy reverence and confidence, as children to a father, able and ready to help us; and that we should pray with and for others.

101. *What do we pray for in the first petition?*

In the first petition, (which is, HALLOWED BE THY NAME,) we pray, That God would enable us and others to glorify Him in all that whereby He maketh Himself known, and that He would dispose all things to His own glory.

102. *What do we pray for in the second petition?*

In the second petition, (which is, THY KINGDOM COME,) we pray, That Satan's kingdom may be destroyed; and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it; and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened.

103. *What do we pray for in the third petition?*

In the third petition, (which is, THY WILL BE DONE IN EARTH, AS IT IS IN HEAVEN,) we pray, That God, by His grace, would make us able and willing to know, obey, and submit to His will in all things, as the angels do in heaven.

104. *What do we pray for in the fourth petition?*

In the fourth petition, (which is, GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD,) we pray, That of God's free gift we may receive a competent portion of the *good things* of this life, and enjoy His blessing with them.

105. *What do we pray for in the fifth petition?*

In the fifth petition, (which is, AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS, AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS,) we pray, That God, for Christ's sake, would freely pardon all our sins; which we are the rather encouraged to ask, because by His grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others.

106. *What do we pray for in the sixth petition?*

In the sixth petition, (which is, AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL,) we pray, That God would either keep us from being tempted to sin, or support and deliver us when we are tempted.

107. *What doth the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer teach us?*

The conclusion of the Lord's Prayer, (which is, FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, AND THE POWER, AND THE GLORY, FOR EVER, AMEN,) teacheth us, to take our encouragement in prayer from God only, and in our prayers to praise Him, ascribing kingdom, power, and glory to Him. And in testimony of our desire, and assurance to be heard, we say, Amen.

'CAN you tell me, which word of the preface to the Lord's Prayer teaches us to pray *with and for others?*'

'It must be the first word, *Our*,' Nellie replied.

'Yes. The little word *Our*, with which the prayer begins, shews us that it is a family prayer—a prayer for the children of God to offer up. And what word *teaches us to draw near to God with all holy reverence and confidence?*'

'"Father" is the word,' said Alice.

'The endearing name *Father*, gives us wonderful encouragement to pray. Read Christ's own explanation of the word Father, in the Lord's Prayer. (Luke xi. 11-13).'

'"If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"'

'The words, *how much more?* tell us that a parent's love to his child, is only a faint emblem of the far greater love of our heavenly Father. How do you know that your parents love you?'

'Oh, mamma, we know quite well. Papa and you are always working for us, and giving us things, and teaching us, and taking us to places, and doing every thing for us.'

'We do love you very tenderly, and try to take care of you, and to make you very happy. But all that we can do for you, is very, very little, when compared with what God has done for us. Often we cannot do for you what we would; but God is able to do everything. When you are ill, we cannot heal you. We cannot preserve your life one moment.'

'You do a great deal to preserve our lives, mamma. When I had scarlet fever, the doctor said it was your good nursing that saved my life.'

'But who gave you loving parents? and who blessed the means they used for your recovery?'

'It was God.'

'And more than all His other gifts, He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all.'

'Why do we say, *which art in heaven*, when God is everywhere?'

'These words remind us that heaven is God's throne; and that when we pray, we present our petitions at the throne of the Great King; and, therefore, we should pray with reverence and godly fear. Read Eccl. v. 2.'

'"Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few."'

'The words, *which art in heaven*, also remind us that heaven is our Father's house, where are many mansions—the home *where our* heart should be.'

'My psalm says:—

"And in God's house for evermore
My dwelling-place shall be."

Does that mean heaven, mamma?' asked Alice.

'Yes, dear. Heaven is the house of the Lord, where His people shall dwell for evermore; and when we pray, "Our Father which art in heaven," we should think of the home above, where Jesus dwells, and where His people meet to part no more.'

'Why are there so many questions in the Catechism about the Lord's Prayer?' asked Nellie.

'How many are there?'

'Eight. The one we have learned on the preface, six on the petitions, and one on the conclusion.'

'In Luther's Catechism there are thirteen questions on the Lord's Prayer. It is so important that young persons should understand this wonderful prayer, that a prominent place has been rightly given to it in the Catechism. Each answer unfolds the meaning of every part of this model prayer; and, if studied intelligently, will aid the young to behold the wondrous things contained in that short but comprehensive form of prayer. The six portions may be classed under two heads—those which refer to the glory of God, and those which refer to our own good. Can you tell me how many petitions belong to each class?'

'The first petition is, *Hallowed be Thy name.* That one is about God's glory,' said Nellie.

'And so is "Thy kingdom come,"' Charlie added.

'*Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.* I think that is a prayer for God's glory too. But the next one, *Give us this day our daily bread,* is a prayer for our own good.'

'Yes. This prayer teaches us to seek first the glory of God. The first three petitions refer to this, and the last three to our own good.'

'But, mamma, I thought the first thing we should seek, was to have our sins forgiven.'

'You are quite right in thinking so. For how can we come to God and call Him Father, till we are reconciled to Him through Jesus? The words, "Our Father, &c.," were given by Jesus to His own disciples. "Abba, Father," is the child's cry. Having received forgiveness through Jesus, the child of God looks up to his Father and prays, "Hallowed be Thy name." What great man, when praying, said, "I am but a little child"?

'It was Solomon, mamma. He said that, when he was praying for wisdom.'

'Yes, Nellie. Solomon humbled himself as a little child; and God was pleased with his prayer, and gave him what he asked, adding riches and honour. It is the child-like spirit which pleases God. Read Jer. iii. 4.'

'"Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, Thou art the guide of my youth."'

'What encouraging words! and they are addressed to sinners. To help you to understand their meaning, read 1 John iii. 1.'

'I have found the place,' said Charlie. And he read: '"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."'

'Art Thou my Father? let me be
A meek, obedient child to Thee,
And try in word, and deed, and thought,
To serve and please Thee as I ought.'

'If God permits us to call Him *Our Father*, surely we *ought to be* His obedient children. We should be as prompt

in our obedience to God, as a little boy of whom I have read was to obey his father.'

'You might tell us about the little boy, mamma.'

'His father was a pointsman on one of the railroads in Prussia. He was just taking his place in order to turn a coming train on to a different track, to prevent a collision with a train coming in a contrary direction, when he saw his little son playing on the track of the advancing engine. He could not rescue his child and turn the points in time; and for want of that, hundreds of lives might be lost. Exclaiming with a loud voice to his son, "Lie down!" he went to his post, and saw the train safely turned on to its proper track. His boy, accustomed to obedience, did as his father commanded him; and the fearful, heavy train, thundered over him. The father rushed forward to where his boy lay, and, to his great joy, found him unharmed. Prompt obedience saved him. Can we render such trustful obedience to our heavenly Father? Had that little boy waited to reason and fear, a fearful death would have overtaken him. Unquestioning obedience is the path of safety. Children are ignorant of the dangers which surround them; and should fully trust, and implicitly obey, their parents, who know what is for their good far better than they do. How much more should we all trust and obey our Father in heaven, who knows all things, and whose commands are ever wise and right?'

Our heavenly Father, hear
The prayer we offer now;
Thy name be hallowed far and near,
To Thee all nations bow;
Thy kingdom come; Thy will
On earth be done in love,
As saints and seraphim fulfil
Thy perfect law above.

Our daily bread supply,
While by Thy word we live;
The guilt of our iniquity
Forgive, as we forgive;
From dark temptation's power,
From Satan's wiles defend,
Deliver in the evil hour,
And guide us to the end.

Thine then for ever be,
Glory and power divine,
The sceptre, throne, and majesty,
Of heaven and earth are Thine.
Thus humbly taught to pray
By Thy beloved Son;
Through Him we come to Thee, and say,
All for His sake be done.

'THIS IS LIFE ETERNAL, THAT THEY MIGHT KNOW THEE THE ONLY TRUE GOD AND JESUS CHRIST, WHOM THOU HAST SENT.'

'ASK, AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN YOU; SEEK, AND YE SHALL FIND; KNOCK, AND IT SHALL BE OPENED UNTO YOU: FOR EVERY ONE THAT ASKETH, RECEIVETH; AND HE THAT SEEKETH, FINDETH; AND TO HIM THAT KNOCKETH, IT SHALL BE OPENED.'

